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How to Revise
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CGP's totally unbiased list of things you need for GCSE revision:

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Stroke to reduce stress

☐ CGP Revision Question Cards

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(We don't sell bananas or cats.)

How to Revise

for GCSE

Become the ultimate revision machine with CGP!

At CGP, we're *the* revision experts. We've tried every revision technique under the sun and figured out which ones actually work.

Then we thought, where's the fun in keeping this knowledge all to ourselves? That's why we've made this book — it's packed with tried and tested revision techniques and subject-specific advice to make sure you've really learned everything you need for the exams.

And with ultra-helpful online videos, examples and timetables included, you can cruise calmly through your revision. You'll be an expert in no time.

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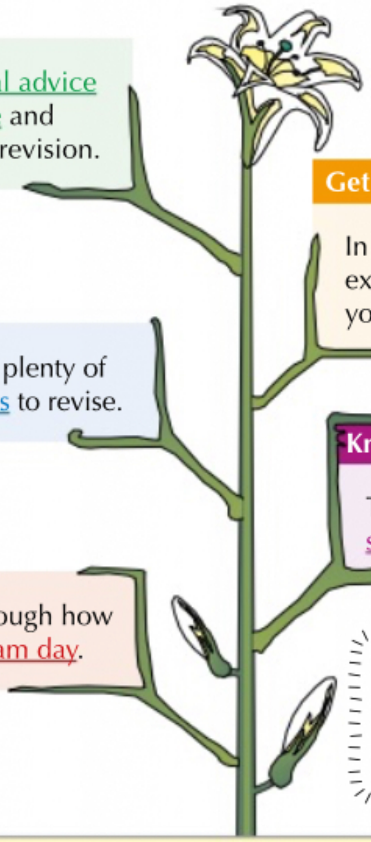
How To Use This Book

It's hard to know where to start with revision but, like a good blanket, this book has you covered. Below you'll find all the goodness contained within these pages that will help make your revision less daunting.

Read the First Half for Revision Advice

The first half of this book gives you guidance and strategies on how best to revise:



Making a Start

This section gives you general advice on how to get ready to revise and looking after yourself during revision.

Get to Know the Exams

In this section, you'll learn what to expect in your exams — this will help you get ready for them when you revise.

Revision Techniques

This section gives you plenty of ideas for different ways to revise.

Know Your Subject

The fourth section gives you subject-specific revision techniques.

On The Day

The last section talks you through how to prepare and cope with exam day.

Look out for QR codes throughout the book — these link to handy online resources, including videos. You can also find them by visiting cgpbooks.co.uk/GCSEHowtoRevise.

Online Extras

Use the Second Half to Plan Your Revision

1) At the back of this book are an exam timetable, topic planners and revision timetables for you to fill in.
2) There's also step-by-step information on how to plan your revision so you use your time wisely.
3) Once you've read the book and filled in your revision timetable, you'll be all set to start revising.

Go forth brave adventurer — your revision journey is about to begin...

Revision is difficult, no question, but to get on top of it you have to put the effort in. Becoming the greatest reviser in the land requires dedicating time to learning the best ways to revise — oh and this book, don't forget this book...

Motivation and Procrastination

Let's address the elephant in the book — you'd probably rather be doing anything other than revising, even reading about how to revise. But thinking about how revision can help with your future goals may (hear me out) make it seem less terrible.

Knowing Why You're Revising Can Motivate You

It's best to start revising early, but even if you're reading this a week before your exams, it's not too late for your revision to make a difference.

1) Think about why you want to do well in your exams. It may be:
    - to get into a good sixth form or college after your GCSEs
    - to help you one day get your dream job
    - to prove to yourself and others that you can do it
2) Whatever your goal, it's best to start revising as soon as possible.
3) Be positive about revision — it can be tough, but it'll really help when exams arrive.
4) Focus on your goals and don't compare yourself to other people.

Five Top Tips For Staying Motivated

1. *Set small targets with rewards (see p.4).*
2. *Remind yourself of your long-term goals.*
3. *Plan a big treat for after your exams.*
4. *Use a topic planner so you can see the progress you've made.*
5. *If you're dreading a particular topic, start with some easier topics first.*

Procrastination Wastes Valuable Time

1) Procrastination means putting off a task that needs doing.
2) You need to avoid procrastination to make the most of your revision:

- Turn off your phone, television and other distractions.
- Give yourself regular breaks — it'll help you keep focused when you're revising.
- Break up your revision into small chunks so it's not one endless slog.
- Start with something small — this will ease you into focusing on your work.

Organisation and Planning

Some things are best when you dive straight in — revision is not one of those things. Making a plan means you can spend more time revising and less time worrying you've forgotten something.

Planning Will Make You Feel in Control

Spend time on a solid revision plan, but don't spend so long that you don't have time to revise.

Reasons to Plan

- You know you have time to cover everything
- You won't forget any topics
- You can prioritise early exams or tricky subjects
- It reduces stress
- It's more efficient

What Happens Without a Plan

- You'll waste time deciding what to revise each session
- You might not allow enough time to revise everything
- You can't easily check what you've already revised
- You may forget some topics

Timetables Can Help You Plan Your Revision

A revision timetable and topic planner will help you schedule your revision and see how you're progressing. You can find handy versions ready to fill in at the back of this book on pages 54-85.

Being Organised Will Save Time

1) Organise your notes and books for each subject to make it easier to find information.
2) Write a to-do list, then prioritise which tasks need to be done first.
3) Make sure you have all the stationery you need (lots of paper, pens, a calculator, etc.) so you can crack on with your revision without a fuss.

To-Do List

1 • *Buy pens and a new protractor* ✓
3 • *Tidy desk* ✓
2 • *Organise Physics notes folder* ✓
4 • *Clean boots for rugby practice* ✓
5 • *Write the most hilarious joke to round off the 'Organisation and Planning' page.*

NOW TRY THIS

Did you hear the one about

Have a go at using the ideas on this page to get your revision up and running. Planning your revision will help you remember to get every little last thing done. Eventually...

Setting Targets

Knowing what you want to achieve in each revision session is important — it keeps you on track.

Make Targets Small and Realistic

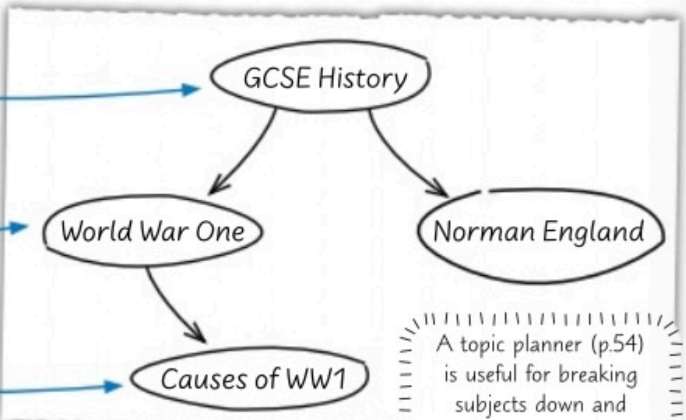
EXAMPLE

Imagine you are revising GCSE History. Here's how you could set targets for your revision session.

A target to revise all of GCSE History is too large — split it into smaller chunks so it's easier to track your progress.

This is still too big — it's too much to revise in one go.

Set yourself manageable targets, e.g. by the end of today, I'll learn the causes of World War One.



A topic planner (p.54) is useful for breaking subjects down and tracking your progress.

Time Frames Can Help You to be Efficient

1) Setting a time frame to achieve your targets helps with motivation.
2) You need to be realistic though. For example:

- Two weeks for fractions — this is too long on a small topic.
- An hour for all of chemistry — this is too little time, so you'll end up rushing through it.

3) Generally, it's better to give yourself slightly more time than you think you'll need. For example:

- Three hours for fractions — if you understand it in less time, use the time elsewhere.

Reward Yourself For Hitting Targets

NOW TRY THIS

1) An incentive could encourage you to work hard to hit your targets.
2) Think of some rewards for finishing a tricky topic or doing a practice paper.
3) Your rewards should be simple and help you relax — e.g. some TV or a walk.
4) Plan a large treat for after your exams as something to look forward to.

Your Revision Environment

To be productive, it's important to know what environment you revise best in.

Different Places Work Best for Different People

Varying where you revise can help freshen up your revision.

There's no right place to revise. Based on how you work best, you'll find some places make you feel more productive than others:

Library

- ✓ Lots of books about subjects you're revising
- ✓ Access to the internet for research
- ✓ Fewer distractions than at home or with friends
- ✗ It may be busy and hard to get a desk
- ✗ It can involve time spent travelling

Bedroom At Home

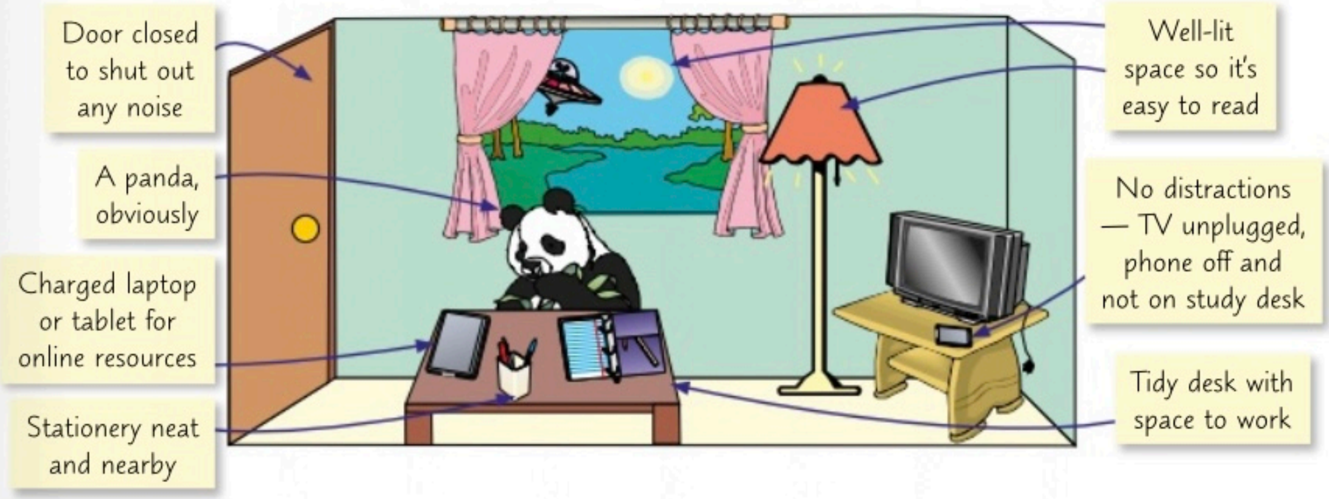
- ✓ You can set up your study space as you want
- ✓ You can shut yourself away for privacy
- ✓ It's easy to get healthy snacks and drinks
- ✗ You may get distracted by your family
- ✗ Television and games are easy to access

Friend's House

- ✓ You can discuss revision problems with your friend
- ✓ You and your friend can test each other
- ✗ You and your friend could distract each other
- ✗ You may become disheartened or stressed if your friend seems to know more than you

A Tidy Study Space is Important

You'll find it easier to revise if your study space is free of clutter:


Door closed to shut out any noise
A panda, obviously
Charged laptop or tablet for online resources
Stationery neat and nearby
Well-lit space so it's easy to read
No distractions — TV unplugged, phone off and not on study desk
Tidy desk with space to work

My astronaut friend loves this page on study spaces...

Piles of books and folders make it hard to get to notes quickly — if you can, use a bookshelf to keep them tidy and accessible. Also avoid clutter and rubbish on your desk, as important things can get lost when everything is on top of each other.

Looking After Yourself

Exam periods can be stressful — it's normal to feel some nerves when you have an exam approaching. Luckily, there are ways to cope so stress doesn't affect your revision or your health.

Exams are Stressful for Everyone

1) You won't be alone in feeling under pressure about exams — it's likely your classmates are also finding this time stressful.
2) A small amount of stress can be good for you — it can motivate you to do better or help you stay focused on working hard until your exams are over.
3) However, too much stress can negatively impact your health. It's important to recognise the signs of stress so you can do something about them.

Signs of Stress include:

- A loss of appetite
- Sudden weight loss or gain
- Feeling anxious
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling emotional
- Struggling to sleep

Keep your Mental Health in Mind

Try out the techniques on pages 6-8 to see which of them work for you.

There are lots of ways to help prevent stress when you're studying:

Make sure your targets for each day are realistic — working in small, manageable chunks will help you stay positive.

Celebrate small wins — acknowledging the progress you've made will help you stay motivated. E.g. you could write down one thing every day that you're proud of achieving in your work.

Take breaks — this will help you relax and make your studying or revision more effective.

Leave time in the evening free to relax — working too late can affect your sleep.

Use distractions such as TV as a reward for studying — this will help you to motivate yourself.

Don't compare yourself to others — everyone works in different ways, so just focus on what you're managing to do each day.

If you're struggling to stay on track, it might be worth rethinking your schedule to make it work better for you.

Don't worry if you're not able to stick to your schedule 100% of the time — there's a lot going on and it's important to take time for yourself.

There are apps that will block social media and other notifications. These can prevent distractions while revising and help you not feel stressed about wasting time.

Looking After Yourself

Take a Break from Technology

1) It's important to give yourself a break from technology — too much screen-time can strain your eyes and affect your sleep.
2) Even just spending some time away from your screen or study area can help — for example:
   - Try taking breaks which don't involve watching TV or scrolling through social media.
   - Eat meals away from your study space and screen.

3) Try to set aside time every day to go outside and get some fresh air.
4) Even if you're not working at a screen, it's still important to take breaks from studying to avoid getting a sore back or neck. Doing just a few stretches can be a good break from work.

Exercise can Reduce Stress

1) Exercise reduces levels of your body's stress hormones, e.g. adrenaline.
2) It also stimulates the production of endorphins (chemicals in your brain that help you feel good). This can help you feel more energised and positive.
3) Exercising can take your mind off things you're worried about.
4) Taking time to exercise can help break up studying and give order to your day.
5) It can also be a way to socialise — e.g. you could go on a walk with a friend.
6) There are lots of different types of exercise that you can do — pick something that you enjoy and will feel motivated to do regularly. Here are some ideas:

Choose exercise that suits your fitness level. Don't push yourself too far — it should be fun and relaxing.

Go outside

- Going for a walk, run or short bike ride in your local area is a great way to get some fresh air.
- You could exercise by yourself, or with a friend.

Do an indoor workout

- There are loads of indoor workouts you can choose from online.
- Do a dance class, or try a HIIT (high-intensity interval training) workout — just make sure you have enough space to do so safely.

Try yoga or Pilates

- Yoga and Pilates combine exercise with breathing and meditation — there are lots of routines online.
- They're a great way to stretch and relax — plus they can improve your concentration.

Looking After Yourself

Mindfulness means Paying Attention to the Present

1) Mindfulness is about taking the time to be aware of your thoughts and feelings, and to experience your different senses.
2) Practising mindfulness can help improve your mental well-being and make you feel more in control.
3) Mindfulness gives you a break from studying and lets you come back to work feeling refreshed.

Mindfulness techniques:

- Focus on the present — try to appreciate small things in your daily life, e.g. a bird singing.
- Do breathing exercises — take deep breaths in and out, focusing on your breathing. This will help de-clutter your brain.

There are Lots of Other Ways to Relax

- *Listen to some music, or find a podcast about something that isn't related to studying.*
- *Spend time doing hobbies you enjoy — e.g. playing an instrument or reading.*
- *Work on a DIY project, or have a go at a new craft.*
- *Try out a new hobby — challenging yourself to do small things like cooking something new can help boost your self-confidence.*
- *Write a diary — this can help you unwind at the end of the day.*

It can be Helpful to Talk to People

1) If you ever feel too stressed (about studying or anything else) remember that you're not alone — talking to someone about how you feel can help you get advice and feel less worried.
2) You could talk to someone you trust — e.g. family members, teachers or your GP.
3) You could also arrange a call with a friend and let them know how you're doing — they might also be feeling anxious, so chatting can help you both.

If you don't feel comfortable talking to someone you know, there are support services and helplines available where you can talk to someone confidentially. For example:

Childline	**Mind**	**Shout 85258**
Call 0800 1111	Call 0300 123 3393	Text 'SHOUT' to 85258

Bottling up your stress won't help — tell people how you feel...

Studying is important, but it's not worth affecting your health. Make sure you take time out from working to do things you enjoy — not only will this make you happier, it'll also make studying easier and help you avoid burnout.

Sleep and Diet

Ah, my two favourite things in the world — snoozing and food. Getting a healthy amount of both these things will keep you at peak condition when you're revising and make it easier to take in information. Yum.

1) Don't Skip Sleep to Revise

Sleep helps you process what you've learnt.

2) Do Something Relaxing Before Bed

Avoid caffeine, strenuous exercise and looking at your phone.

3) Keep Your Phone Away From Your Bed

It'll disrupt your sleep if it keeps going off.

4) Sleep on Your Revision Notes

You'll revise through osmosis. If you don't know what osmosis is, sleep on a biology book tonight...

5) Eat Plenty of Fruit and Veg

Yes, even broccoli (honestly, you'll grow to like it).

6) Don't Skip Meals

It makes it difficult to concentrate.

7) Get Plenty of Protein

Oily fish are great to eat (but hard to catch).

8) Drink Lots of Water

From a glass, from a mug, from a bowl if you're a maverick.

9) Grab a Snack When You're Feeling Peckish

Keep your energy levels up so you can be the best revisionista possible.

Know What You'll be Tested On

No one knows the future — except me. If you learn what gets tested, you'll know just how to get marks.

Learn These Three Rhymes to Prepare for What Exams Test

CHECK the SPEC

Look at the exam board specifications for all your subjects.

Specifications tell you what you'll be tested on — check which topics you'll have to answer questions about before you start revising.

They also tell you how many papers you'll have to sit for each subject, how long you'll have for each paper and what percentage of your overall grade each paper is worth.

Make sure you look at past papers too — they show you the types of questions that could come up (see p.16 for more).

You can find specifications and Assessment Objectives on exam boards' websites. (Ask your teacher which ones you need.)

KNOW the AOs

Assessment Objectives are broad statements about what you need to show in your exams.

They differ for each GCSE, but include things like subject knowledge and analytical ability.

You should find out exactly which AOs are tested in each of your exams.

Get HYPED for Question TYPES

Different question types come up in different exam papers (e.g. you might get an extract in one English exam but not in the other).

Make sure you know which types of questions to expect.

Find Out What You'll Get Marks For

It's important to know exactly what to aim for to earn those all-important marks. Here are a few ways to leave the examiner giddy with delight:

For maths questions, make sure you know when to show your working.

Use specific vocabulary and examples where possible (e.g. dates / locations in History).

In science and maths, make sure answers are realistic and in the correct units.

Check your writing — some humanities exams give marks for SPaG.

Be prepared for questions about 'working scientifically' in science exams.

NOW TRY THIS

My Geography teacher tested me on volcanoes, but my pens melted...

I know, I know, you thought learning all your subject content was enough, and here I am telling you to learn about the exams too. Well, you've come this far, so take a breath and go check out some specs.

Command Words

You'll need to know what different questions are asking you to do — that's where command words come in.

Read the Exam Question Carefully

Command Words Video

Read the question a few times (or until you understand it).

Use the number of marks available as a guide for how long to spend on a question.

Underline or circle key phrases and command words.

Command Words are Key — They Tell You What to Do

Common **Science** & **Maths** commands:

Command	Meaning
Describe →	talk through a process or trend
Outline →	state information about...
Suggest →	give possible causes for...
Calculate →	complete a calculation
Show →	prove something is true / false
Explain →	give reasons for something

Common **English** & **Humanities** commands:

Command	Meaning
Discuss →	talk about different perspectives
How far do you agree? →	give your opinion (and why)
How important is... →	discuss the significance of...
How useful is... →	weigh up the pros and cons of...
Use evidence to show... →	support a view with examples
Explain →	give reasons for something

EXAMPLE

Here are some example questions that use command words.

Calculate the value of 'x'.

The command word here is 'calculate', so you need to work out a value. E.g. "x = 5". Remember to show your working if the question asks you to.

Discuss the theme of creation in *Frankenstein*.

The command word here is 'discuss', so you know this requires a longer answer that uses several different opinions or bits of information.

Long-Answer Questions

For lots of subjects, you'll have to write longer answers — don't panic, these pages give you the lowdown...

Take Some Time to Plan Your Answers

Planning helps you get your ideas in order, so you don't run out of things to say once you start writing.

Long-Answer Questions Video

For each long-answer question:

- Read the question carefully.
- Read every text or source you need to.
- Check what command words the question uses.

Now make a quick plan:

- Jot down your main ideas.
- Link your ideas by topic or theme.
- Outline the structure of your answer.

And remember:

- Don't spend too long planning.
- Neatly cross out your plan when you finish.

Write Well to Get Marks in Long-Answer Questions

Structure Your Writing

- *Use paragraphs to organise your points and link ideas.*
- *Link your paragraphs using phrases such as 'on the other hand' and 'in addition'.*

You should aim to:

- Start with a short introduction.
- End with a brief summary / conclusion that clearly reminds the reader of your main argument.

Write Clearly

- *Don't make your sentences too complicated.*
- *Check your argument is easy to understand.*
- *Use specific examples and precise quotes.*

mistake
If you make a ~~misstacke~~, neatly cross it out and write the correction above.

Answer the question:

- *Make sure you aren't just waffling.*
- *Make sure everything you write is relevant.*
- *Keep your ideas clear and to the point.*

Long-Answer Questions

Remember That You are Writing For an Examiner

Standard English

Make sure you write properly:

Avoid informal words.
(Romeo's mate Mercutio) ✗

Steer clear of slang.
(The poem made me LOL.) ✗

Don't use filler words.
(Pollution is, like, bad.) ✗

Avoid contractions.
(Residents could've been rehoused in new towns.) ✗

Explaining Phrases

Explain things clearly using phrases like:

- *this signifies that...*
- *this highlights...*
- *this suggests that...*
- *furthermore...*

These will keep your answers easy to follow.

Linking Words

Link ideas and points with words such as:

- *however*
- *in contrast*
- *similarly*
- *alternatively*

They will make your answer flow nicely.

Don't Forget to Check Your SPaG

Some GCSE exams give you marks just for the quality of your Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) — so it's well worth getting it right.

Recipe for Perfect SPaG:

1) Avoid common spelling mistakes (e.g. mixing up 'there' and 'their').
2) Use punctuation properly — remember to check it's all correct.
3) Don't change tenses by mistake — it's confusing and won't make sense.
4) Watch out for double negatives — avoid them in your answers.
5) Start a new paragraph for a new point — don't just write in one block of text.
6) Leave time to quickly check your answers. Take 5 minutes to fix any silly mistakes.

If you want to really master spelling, punctuation and grammar, take a peek at CGP's SPaG range.

All this talk of SPaG should help you pasta exams...

Writing clearly and having good SPaG is really important for long-answer questions. If you don't tick those boxes, then you aren't making it as easy as possible for the examiner to understand your answers (and give you mega marks).

Weird Questions

Every so often, exams might hit you with something strange (like a fish). Don't fear though — help is here...

You Might Need to Tackle an Unusual Question in Your Exam

Oh no — you've flicked through your exam paper and seen a question that looks totally unfamiliar...

1. *Don't Panic* → 2. *Read it carefully* → 3. *Think it through*

(It's probably just asking you to apply something you do know, but in a new way.)

EXAMPLE

Sometimes maths problems might be set in a real-life (wordy) context.
This means you have to work out what you need to do before you can do the maths:

Evan buys apples in crates of 50 apples. Each crate costs £22.50.
He presses 3 crates of apples every weekday (Mon-Fri) and 2 crates per day at the weekend.
How much will it cost Evan to buy enough crates of apples to keep pressing them for 5 weeks?

Underlining the information you need can help.

Use what you've underlined to create the correct calculations for your answer:

Number of crates needed for 1 week = (3 x 5) + (2 x 2) = 19
Number of crates needed for 5 weeks = 19 x 5 = 95
Total cost of every crate needed = 95 x £22.50 = £2137.50

Be Prepared for Tricky (But Predictable) Questions

If you know certain types of questions are bound to come up, you can be ready for them.

History: Using Sources

In History, you can get questions which ask you to decide how useful a source is — these can be tricky. It might help to ask yourself:

Does any info make the source more / less reliable?

Consider:
- Who wrote it
- Who they wrote it for
- Why they wrote it

Does the source match what you know about the topic?

- Compare what you know about the topic with the information in the source.
- If they don't match, think about why.

Does the source tell the full story?

- Consider whether the source leaves out key information.
- The source may be unreliable if the writer is deliberately trying to hide something.

Weird Questions

English Literature: Unseen Poetry

It can be tough not knowing which poems will come up. Whatever happens, remember to:

1. *READ the poem — work out what it's about.*
2. *IDENTIFY the poem's message — think about why the poet wrote it.*
3. *EXPLORE emotions and feelings — consider the poem's mood.*
4. *PICK OUT literary techniques — explain their effect and use quotes.*
5. *INCLUDE your thoughts — think about how the poem made you feel.*

Science: Calculation Questions

A good chunk of marks are available for calculation questions.
If you find maths daunting, these things can help:

Show Your Working Out → *You get marks for it and it can help you spot silly errors.*

Check Your Answer → *Make sure your answer seems sensible.*

Read Tables / Graphs Carefully → *Double check you've used the correct figures.*

Geography: Case Studies

Think of Case Studies as detailed examples. You'll be asked to evaluate, explain or suggest things based on your knowledge. When answering Case Study questions:

Avoid general answers that could be about anywhere.

Use clear and specific details (e.g. dates, place names, events).

Answer the question — don't just write out every fact you know.

EXAMPLE

✗ There was an earthquake in Italy that killed people and caused lots of damage.

✓ In 2009, there was a 6.3 magnitude earthquake in L'Aquila (Italy) that killed more than 300 people and left more than 60,000 people homeless.

Do dogs have eyebrows, or do some eyebrows just have legs?

Don't let these pages panic you too much — it's unlikely you'll get asked anything really weird in your exam. It's still a good idea to be prepared for all the tricky things that might come up though, just in case...

Make the Most of Practice Papers

Now you know what you're aiming for in the exam, put it into practice by doing some, er... practice.

Do as Many Practice Questions as You Can

Practice Papers Video

1) The key to GCSE success is to ~~use a crystal ball~~ be well prepared for the exams. To do this, you need to have a go at answering some exam-style questions.
2) Do as many practice papers as you can. CGP has plenty of practice papers, and you can find past exam papers on exam board websites.
3) Practice papers and past papers also show you how long you'll have for the exam — this will give you an idea of how long to spend on each question.
4) When you start answering practice questions, you could use your notes to help you. As the exam gets closer, practise under exam conditions.

There's more about using practice papers on pages 28-29.

CGP's Practice Paper Top Tips

1 Practise under exam conditions sssh

- Get the right equipment out.
- Time yourself.
- Find somewhere quiet, with no distractions.
- Don't use your revision notes to help you.

2 Use the mark scheme ✓

- All practice papers should have mark schemes.
- These tell you how marks are allocated and how to get the right answer.*
- Compare the mark scheme to what you wrote.
- Mark yourself, correcting what you got wrong.

*Unfortunately, they don't tell you the meaning of life.

3 Check out examiner's reports

- These tell you what people struggled with, and the things examiners look for (besides love).
- Putting yourself in an examiner's shoes helps you see how to improve your answers.

4 Do it all again

- Once you've marked your exam and figured out where you went wrong, take a break from it.
- After a day or two, go back over your notes and then do the exam again.
- This helps the right answer stick in your head.

5 Don't panic!!!!

- If you don't get a high mark at first, don't worry — the idea is to get a bit better each time.

NOW TRY THIS

Exam practice is like washing your hair — you should rinse and repeat...

... if you want to improve (/ have minty-fresh follicles). Whatever stage of revision you're at, practice papers are handy — start by familiarising yourself with exam-style questions and build up to having a go at a paper.

Learn, Revise, Test Yourself

This process is super important. You can't revise what you don't understand, or practise what you don't know, so don't skip out steps — there's no time for monkeying around.

LEARN

The learning process starts by making notes in class and doing homework, but sometimes you might have to do some extra research too.

Before you start revising a topic, you need to make sure that you understand it.

If there's anything you're not sure about, you could:

- look back over your notes carefully and read the textbook again.
- do some research, in the library or online.
- ask your teacher.

There's more about organising and adding to your notes on pages 18-19.

REVISE

When you're happy that you understand a topic, you can move on to revise it.

Revising is the process of going back over what you've learnt so that you're ready to answer questions on it in an exam.

There are many different ways to revise — here are just a few examples:

- condensing your notes (see p.20)
- mind maps (see p.21)
- flow charts (see p.22)
- flash cards (see p.23)

You can also try techniques to help you remember and retrieve more (see p.24-25).

Don't worry if you find something you don't understand — just go back and learn it again.

To make a topic stick, test yourself on it at increasing intervals after revising it, e.g. after half an hour, after two hours, after a day, etc.

TEST YOURSELF

Once you're happy that you know a topic, it's time to test yourself:

- You could start by doing some quick fact recall questions, and then go on to some practice exam questions.
- It's really important to do some realistic exam practice — some questions will ask you to apply what you've learnt in different ways so it's good to know you can do this.
- Look at the Test Yourself pages in this book (p.28-29) for other ideas.

If there's something you can't remember, go back to your notes and revise it again.

Getting Your Notes in Order

Before you start revising, you need to get your notes together and make sure they're as useful as they can be...

Start By Gathering the Notes You Have

1) You'll have made notes in many ways — class notes, homework, coursework, independent study, etc.
2) Arrange your notes in a sensible way, e.g. have a separate folder for each subject, and split each subject into topics — this'll make it easier to keep track of what you've got and find what you need.
3) To make sure you have notes on every topic, check the exam spec. Exam specs show what you need to know or do to perform well in the exam.

Fill in Any Gaps

1) If you're missing notes on a topic, you can find information to fill in the gaps in lots of places — revision guides, textbooks, online resources, etc.
2) When you write notes, don't just copy things down word for word.
3) Instead, you should write the key information in your own words. This will help you actively learn the content while you're studying. It will also make your notes easier to understand and refer to.
4) There's more on how to make effective notes below.

Make Sure Your Notes Are Neat and Clear

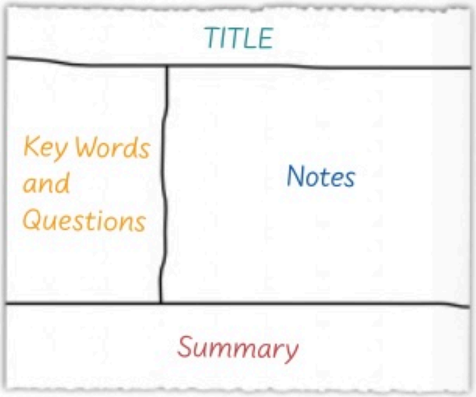
1) If your notes are muddled or hard to read, you won't be able to revise effectively from them.
2) Tidy them up and rewrite any parts that are particularly confusing and hard to follow. When you fill in gaps or rewrite notes, try these methods to make your notes as useful as possible:

You Could Split Your Notes Into Sections

1) Splitting your page into different parts means you need to think about what fits where, so it's a great way of checking that you understand it.
2) You could divide your page into:

This is called the Cornell method.

- the title of the topic at the top of the page.
- a large right-hand column for writing your notes.
- a small left-hand column — after you've written your notes, fill this column in with review questions and key words based on your notes. These will act as prompts for remembering the information in the notes column.
- an area at the bottom of the page to summarise your notes once you've written them.



Getting Your Notes in Order

You Can Also Use Indentations

1) Indenting lets you organise your notes into main points, sub points and extra info.
    - Start with your main point on the left
    - Add a sub point indented underneath
    - Add any extra points for that sub point
    - Add further information for each extra point
2) This creates a logical outline of the information and helps you see how different points link together.
3) This method is most effective when you're working at your own pace and have time to plan the structure of your notes.
4) It works best for subjects with lots of information, like Biology, History or English Literature. It may not be so useful for subjects like Maths, where practice is the key to revision.

This is called the outlining method.

Germ Theory
  1. Louis Pasteur (French chemist)
    - *1857: blamed germs for souring of sugar beet in fermenting industrial alcohol*
    - *1861: published his Germ Theory*
      → suggested that microbes in the air caused decay and disease
  2. Impacts
    - *Theory linked disease to poor living conditions*
      → British government passed 1875 Public Health Act

Draw Attention to Key Information

1) Whether you're making notes from scratch or tidying up your existing notes, emphasising the most important information is a good idea.
2) Use a mixture of techniques to do this:
    - Add subheadings to organise the information.
    - Use highlighting to pick out the most important points.
    - Colour-code information to show links, e.g. write all definitions in orange.

EXAMPLE

You don't need to write in full sentences — just make sure your notes are clear.

Theme: Prejudice

Characters who are victims of prejudice:

Shylock — Christian characters are hostile towards him. Duke calls him "inhuman wretch".

Jessica — Experiences anti-Semitism, even after marrying Lorenzo and becoming Christian.

Characters who are prejudiced:

Antonio — He is anti-Semitic and would "spit on" Shylock.

Shylock — Hates Antonio "for he is a Christian".

NOW TRY THIS

My piano teacher always complains my notes aren't in order...

It's a good idea to keep your notes organised from the start of your GCSEs. If you haven't, don't panic, but get them in order now. When you find a gap or some messy notes, try out one of the methods above.

Condensing Your Notes

Now your notes are as neat as a pin, it's time to get cracking. You can't learn every word you've ever written, so you need to condense your notes — these will act as prompts for your main notes. Off we go...

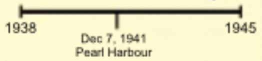
Condense Your Notes In Your Own Words

Condensing Notes Extras

1) Simplify and summarise your notes into key points so they're easier to revise from.
2) Aim to get each topic onto a single page. Cut out the waffle and pick out what's important.
3) Try to reorganise the material in some way, e.g. by grouping it differently or linking topics together.
4) How you present your notes might depend on the subject. For example, you could make:

Labelled diagrams for Science.

A timeline of key dates for History.



A page of key quotes for English Literature.

A table of formulas and rules for Maths.

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$

5) Condensing topics makes your revision interactive — it's better than just re-reading your notes. Plus, you're more likely to remember your own words than something someone else has written*. To test this out, have a go at condensing the notes for one of your topics.

NOW TRY THIS

EXAMPLE

Here's an example of some condensed notes for a Physics topic.

Wind turbines don't produce pollution in order to generate power, and there are no fuel costs to run them. However, they can be quite noisy for people who live nearby and they don't produce electricity in very strong winds or when there's no wind.

Wind Turbines

Positives	*Negatives*
• *No pollution*	• *Noisy*
• *No fuel costs*	• *Dependent on wind*

Test Yourself On What You've Covered

When you've simplified a topic, it's time to test yourself:

1) Cover up your notes and write down as much as you can remember.
2) Compare what you've written to your notes, then fill in any gaps — use a different colour so you know which bits you missed.
3) Keep doing this until you remember everything on the topic.
4) This is an active recall technique — there's more about this on p.24.

It's a good idea to come back and test yourself again later, to see what you can still remember. (See p.51 for more about spaced practice.)

***apart from my words — you'll definitely remember my words...**

The key to condensing is picking out the right points. Try highlighting the important bits before you start writing.

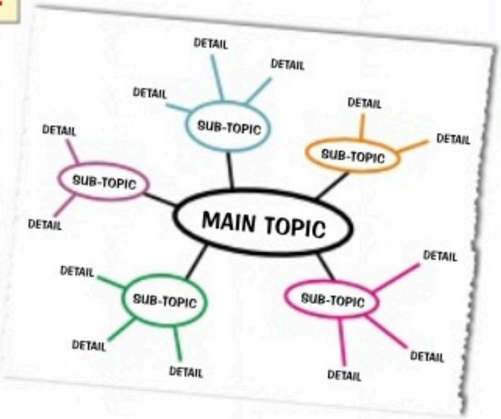
Drawing Mind Maps

If you say 'mind map' as fast as you can 40 times while looking at a topic, one will draw itself...

A Mind Map is a Type of Diagram

Mind Maps Extras

1) Mind maps are a visual way to organise information.
2) One mind map usually represents one topic.
3) The name of the topic goes in the middle, with sub-topics and further detail added around it.
4) Details are short and to the point.
5) Boxes or bubbles around some of the information can help it stand out.
6) A good mind map uses colour and images.



Mind Maps Are Great For Revising Topics

1) Organising material visually can make it easier to recall in an exam.
2) Colour and images can help topics and information to stick in your memory.
3) Mind maps can help you to identify the key ideas of a topic and find links between them, which can help you see the topic in different ways.

You Can Use Them Throughout Your Revision

Mind maps are really useful for subjects where there are lots of links between ideas (e.g. History or English) but less useful for learning a list of formulae or a vocab list.

At the start

Use your notes and other resources to draw a mind map of a topic — it's a great way of revising key information.

During revision

You could pin your completed mind maps up in your revision space so that you see them regularly.

To test yourself

Draw a mind map of a topic from memory, then refer to the original and fill in any gaps in a different colour — this shows you what you still need to revise.

NOW TRY THIS

They told me to mind my own business...

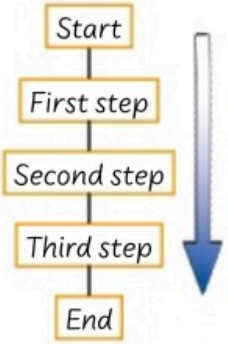
... so I minded my business, my history, my maths, my geography. Making and using mind maps will make your revision really effective and more fun, so pick a topic and have a go at making one yourself.

Making Flow Charts

Flow charts are the next big thing. The talk of the town. Everyone's mad about them, haven't you heard? Don't just take my word for it though, read on and see for yourself... (Gotcha, they're all my words too.)

Flow Charts Take Topics Step By Step

1) Flow charts are a type of diagram that show a process from beginning to end.
2) They organise information clearly — you can use words and images to show what happens when.
3) It's tempting to spend ages making your flow charts look perfect, but as long as they're clear and easy to use, they don't need to be fancy. Scan the QR code for an example of how to make one.



Flow Charts Extras

Start at the Start

1) It might sound obvious, but order is really important in flow charts.
2) Write the first step in the process at the top of the page and work downwards.
3) Flow charts highlight the main steps in a process, but if it helps, you can add key points about the different steps to jog your memory — keep them short and concise though.

They're Useful for Lots of Subjects

Flow charts show how different stages or events are linked together, so they're useful for subjects that include sequences or processes.

Have a go at making one yourself. If you need a bit of inspiration, here are a few examples of when you might use them:

NOW TRY THIS

Business Studies — to show the different stages within a supply chain.
History — a timeline of the events that led to the Great Depression.
Chemistry — to set out the steps of a practical experiment.
Geography — to present the different stages of erosion.
Biology — to show how food passes through the digestive system.

Don't stress about it — just go with the flow...

Flow charts are a great way to mix your revision up and keep it engaging. Using the same techniques all the time is snoring (snore + boring, come on... keep up) and it's much harder to make information stick in your mind.

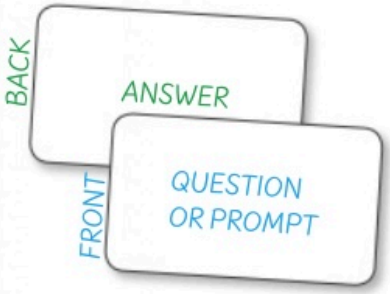
Using Flash Cards

Flash cards are one of the simplest, but most effective, revision tools. You might not be able to play solitaire or snap with them, but with a little patience, they'll help you bridge any gaps and make you número uno.

Flash Cards Are a Great Revision Tool

1) Flash cards are small cards with a question or prompt on one side, and the answer or information on the other side.
2) They're a great way to test yourself and find gaps in your knowledge.
3) Flash cards are useful for learning things like:
    - important dates in History
    - language vocabulary
    - key words and definitions
    - formulae
    - labelled diagrams

You can also put condensed topic information on flash cards for you to refer to.



Flash cards aren't so good for learning things like processes and more complex information that can't be easily split up — take a look at the rest of this chapter for ideas on how to revise these.

4) There are lots of flash cards available online, but it's a good idea to make your own. Working through your notes and picking out information is part of the revision process.

Another great way to use flash cards is by filling one side with example questions about a topic, and the other side with the answers. This can be useful after you've revised a topic and want to test yourself on it. (I hear CGP do a pretty awesome range of revision question cards...)

Use Them to Test Yourself

NOW TRY THIS

Flash Cards Extras

Have a go at these methods for using your flash cards effectively:

Say your answers out loud — this forces you to answer the questions properly.

Group your flash cards based on how well you know the content. Test yourself more often on the groups you struggle with than those you know better.

Make sure you test yourself both ways — e.g. you need to know vocab translations from English to French and French to English.

Ask someone else to test you — it removes the temptation to check the other side yourself before answering.

Flash cards — lighting the way to revision success...

Flash cards are useful because they're pocket-sized — imagine all the wonderful places you can take them to revise.

Memory Techniques

Here's a lovely heap of memory techniques — try them all out and see which ones work for you.

Active Learning is More Effective Than Passive Learning

Memory Techniques Video

1) Passive techniques, like reading and highlighting notes, aren't great at fixing information in your mind.
2) Active techniques move knowledge from your short-term memory into your long-term memory so it's there when you need it (i.e. in the exam).
3) Using flash cards (see p.23) is one active learning technique — flash cards get you to recall facts and answers in order to help them stick in your memory.
4) Here are a bunch more memory techniques that involve active learning...

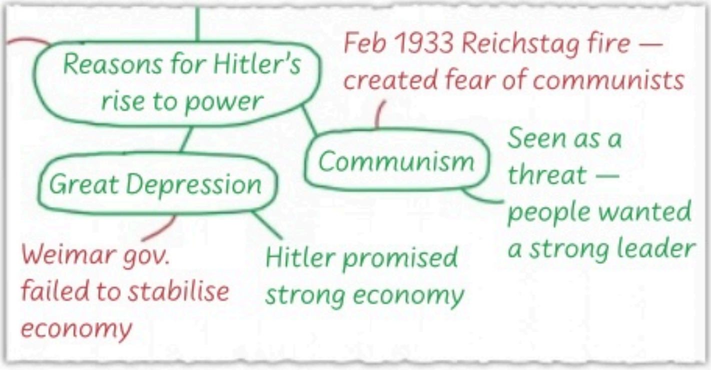
Blurting Helps You See What You Do And Don't Know

Blurting is pretty much what it sounds like — getting all your knowledge onto the page.

- Read a text or watch a video about a specific topic.
- Using a coloured pen, write down everything you can remember.
- Compare your notes to the text or video and use a different coloured pen to add anything you missed.
- By using two colours, you can see what you need to test yourself on more.

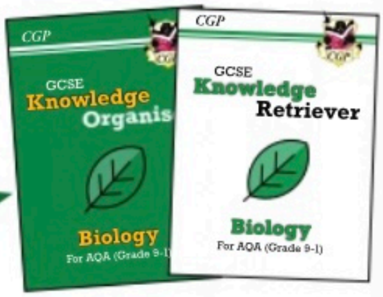
EXAMPLE

Here's an example of blurting from part of a history mind map — everything in green was written without notes, and the information in red was added later.


Reasons for Hitler's rise to power
Feb 1933 Reichstag fire — created fear of communists
Communism
Seen as a threat — people wanted a strong leader
Great Depression
Weimar gov. failed to stabilise economy
Hitler promised strong economy

Knowledge Organisers And Retrievers Help You Actively Learn

1) Knowledge organisers are a great revision tool — they strip topics back to only the most important information.
2) Once you feel confident that you know the topic, you can use a knowledge retriever — these help you actively learn by testing your ability to recall information from the knowledge organiser.
3) You can find knowledge organisers and retrievers online, though the best ones are available from CGP (totally unbiased opinion here...).


CGP
GCSE
Knowledge Organis
Biology
For AQA (Grade 9-1)
CGP
GCSE
Knowledge Retriever
Biology
For AQA (Grade 9-1)

Memory Techniques

Chunking Splits Information Into Groups

1) People find information easier to recall if it's split into chunks — e.g. when phone numbers are written down, the numbers are split into smaller groups.
2) You can apply a similar technique to your revision. Chunking takes a large piece of information and puts it into smaller groups so it's easier to remember.
3) Here are some examples of how you can chunk information:

- Group people or events based on something they have in common — for example, you could group characters from a novel into their families or close relationships.
- Group words into categories, e.g. French words about sport, school, etc.

4) Look for connections between the bits of information in a group — this will help you remember them more easily. For example, if you have a group of years, you could look for patterns in the numbers or in the gaps between each year.
5) You can also use a mnemonic to help you remember what's in each group. For example:

This is the order of light waves you need to know... → *__R__adio waves, __M__icrowaves, __I__nfrared, __V__isible light, __U__ltraviolet, __X__-rays, __G__amma rays*

__R__accoons __M__ay __I__njure __V__ery __U__nfortunate E__X__-__G__olfers ← ... and this is a mnemonic sentence you could learn.

Remember Facts Through Storytelling

Creating stories about what you've learned can help you recall information more easily:

Fact	*Story*
Oceanic and continental plates meet at destructive plate margins. The denser oceanic plate is forced down into the mantle.	*Brothers Oceanic and Continental were always wrestling — they were destructive whenever they met. One day, Continental pushed the heavier Oceanic right into the mantle piece.*

The more quirky and unusual your story is, the more memorable it'll be.

NOW TRY THIS

Luckily, you don't have to remember all of these techniques...

Have a go at all of the techniques to see which ones you like most. Remember that a lot of these techniques require repeating the same steps a few times before the information really sinks in.

More Revision Tips

Don't panic about what other people are doing — do what works for you. Be a revision warrior, not a worrier — face your revision head-on and be proactive. Repeat after me: I can do this. I can do this...

Revise With a Friend

1) Test each other on different topics, e.g. using flash cards.
2) Try speaking for a minute on a topic, then get your friend to ask you questions on it.
3) Come up with funny pictures or stories to help you remember information. Get creative!

- Revising with a friend can be useful, but it's best not to do it all the time — it can be distracting, and it's important to do your own revision too.
- Don't chat while you're revising. Take regular breaks, as you would if you were revising alone, and save your chatting for then.

Say It Out Loud

NOW TRY THIS

Saying things out loud is a great way to engage with topics — it stops you skimming over details. Have a go at incorporating this into your revision by using these ideas:

- Record yourself reading the key points of a topic and then listen to the recording regularly. Say the points out loud as you listen to them.
- Change the lyrics to your favourite songs to be about topics you need to remember — challenge your friends to do the same and share your lyrics.

Exercise Your Mind and Your Body

Incorporating exercise into your revision routine can really pay off because exercise stimulates your brain (see p.7). There are lots of different ways of doing it, for example:

- To help with language revision, you could hit a tennis ball against a wall, reciting a different part of the verb table every time it bounces.
- Play catch with a friend and say a fact about a topic or the next step in a sequence when the ball comes to you.

More Revision Tips

Work Out Your Strengths And Weaknesses

1) To make your revision as effective as possible, you should focus on topics that you're not so strong on. There are a few ways you can identify areas to improve on:
    - ask your teachers
    - look at the results of your mock exams to see where you lost marks
    - look at feedback on assessments
    - look over homework and see which bits you did less well on
    - ask your friends — especially ones you've worked with on group projects

2) Plan more time for these topics when you're making your revision timetable (see p.47-51).
3) However, you shouldn't completely ignore topics that you feel confident on — it's important to revise these areas so they stay fresh in your mind.

Apps And Online Tools Can Help You Revise

1) There are lots of resources online that aim to make revision easier. For example:
    - Quiz apps — make sure they're testing information that's on your exam spec.
    - Flash card apps — create flash cards on your phone or tablet, then test yourself.
    - Time management tools — these can help you track how much time you're spending on different tasks.
    - Reminder tools — to remind you to take breaks and eat snacks. Yay.
2) While apps can be helpful, they can also become distractions. If they're making you revise less effectively, then don't use them.

Put On Background Music

1) Some people find it easier to revise with music on quietly in the background.
2) Music can improve your mood — this can make you feel more motivated, which can help you revise more effectively.
3) Songs without lyrics are often best — lyrics can be distracting.
4) White noise can block out distracting sounds if it's noisy where you're revising.
5) If you're testing yourself under exam conditions, you should work in silence.

Some people think music makes revision less effective — you'll need to decide if it works for you.

These pages dish out more tips than a generous group at a restaurant...

There's lots you can do to spice up your revision, but what's most important is finding the techniques that help you learn in the most effective way. Try each of these techniques at least once to see which of them work best for you.

Test Yourself

You've flowed the charts and you've flashed the cards, but now it's time to test how much you know. Don't fret if you don't do well immediately when testing yourself — it's not the actual exam after all.

You Can Practise in Smaller Chunks

Before doing a full practice paper, you may find it helpful to get familiar with exam-style questions.

For subjects where you'll need to answer multiple long-answer questions, you could try writing an answer to just one long-answer question. This can help you get a feel for how to write longer answers without worrying about answering more than one of these questions in a row or in a certain time limit.

Try swapping exam answers with a classmate so you can give feedback on each other's work and share ideas. This should help you to see what you do well and what you need to work on.

You can also try just planning your answers — doing this for a range of questions will help you to get better at structuring longer answers quickly and working out what to cover.

Focus on practice questions for the topics you're struggling with or the question types you need to work on. This will help you feel more confident to tackle these questions in the exam.

Past Papers Will Test Your Knowledge

1) When you feel ready, apply your knowledge by doing a full past paper.
2) Replicate exam conditions — this will give you a good feel for what it'll be like in the actual exam:
   - give yourself the same amount of time you'll have in the exam.
   - do it without your notes — this will show you what you know and what you need to revise again.

Mark Your Paper with a Mark Scheme

1) Once you've finished, look at the mark scheme to see how well you did:
   - Mark schemes tell you how marks are allocated and can show you how to get the correct answer.
   - Work through any questions you got wrong — this will help you see what to do next time you get a similar question.

You can sometimes get marks for showing your work, even if your answer is wrong. The mark scheme will show you how these marks are awarded.

2) Seeing where you've missed marks will help you work out which topics you need to revise more.

Test Yourself

Review Weak Spots And Test Yourself Again

First Identify the topics that you didn't do so well on in the past paper.

Next After a day or two, revise the tricky topics and then do the past paper again.

Last If you're still struggling with any topics, test yourself on the information again until it sticks.

Examiner's Reports Point Out Common Mistakes

1) After you've finished and marked a past paper, it's worth having a look at the examiner's report.
2) Examiner's reports tell you what worked well in people's answers — this can give you tips about the kind of things the examiner is looking for.
3) They also tell you what people struggled with in the exam — this can help you avoid common mistakes.
4) You can use this information to guide your answers when you test yourself again, or when it comes to the real exam.

As you read the examiner's report, highlight and annotate parts of your notes that they mention — for example, terms that lots of students got wrong.

Don't Worry if You're Struggling at First

1) Having a go at practice papers can be stressful, especially if you're not doing as well as you'd like to, but try not to panic.
2) The more practice you do, the more familiar you'll become with what to expect in the exam — this should increase your confidence and make things feel less frightening on the day.

Doing a practice paper more than once should hopefully show that you've made some encouraging progress. If you don't see any improvement at first, don't worry — just keep revising the topics you're struggling with and then give the paper another try.

3) If exam practice is leaving you stressed, take a look at pages 6-8 for ways to look after yourself.

Doing past papers will increase your chance of passed papers...

It can feel like a lot of work, but doing past papers is the best practice. Not only will it get you used to the types of questions you'll face on the big day, but you'll get more confident about timings and the format of the exam.

Maths

Additional revision tips coming your way, divided into different subjects. You might wish you could subtract Maths from your life, but these handy tips will give you warm, fuzzy feelings for it that will only multiply.

Practice is the Best Revision

1) The best way to revise maths is by doing practice questions.
2) Start by practising questions on specific topics once you've revised them.
3) Then do practice papers to test a mixture of topics — this will help you identify weak areas (see p.28-29).

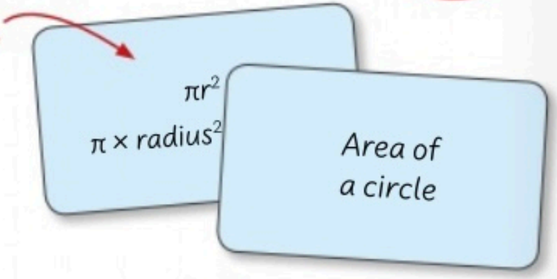
Remember Formulas with Flash Cards

You may miss out on marks if you don't remember and use formulas correctly.

EXAMINER REPORT

1) Flash cards are good for learning formulas.
2) Write a prompt on one side of the card, and the formula on the other side (see p.23 on how to use flash cards).
3) Some formulas aren't given in the exam so you need to learn those formulas as part of your revision.

Check with your teacher to see which formulas you need to learn.



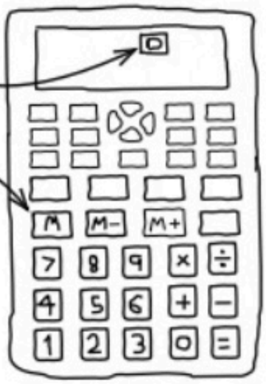
Get to Know Your Calculator

Practise using the calculator you'll use in your calculator exam(s).

Make sure it's set to 'degrees' mode. There should be a 'D' or 'DEG' written in the display window.

Know how to use the memory functions to store answers during multi-step calculations.

M, STO and RCL are popular memory function buttons.



Use memory functions to avoid rounding too early

If you get an answer with lots of decimal places during a multi-step question, use the memory function. You can then use that number for the next step instead of rounding, which may affect your final answer.

Maths

Understand What a Question is Asking

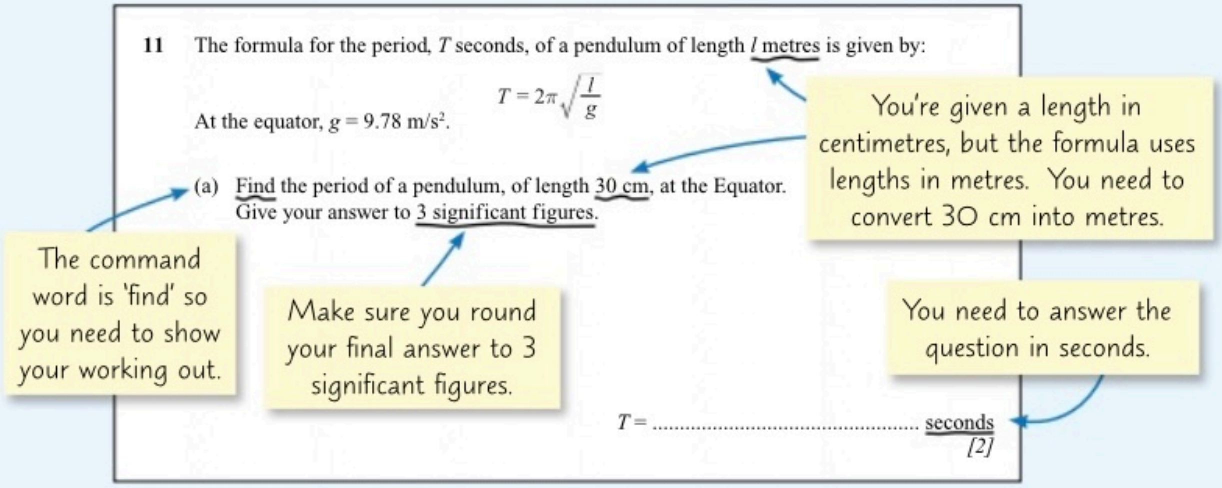
1) Know what each command word wants you to do.
2) Use the number of marks as a guide to how much time you should spend on a question.
3) Show your working out — marks are given for it.
4) Answer in the correct units, or to the correct number of significant figures or decimal places.

Command Words

- Write down/state — give a brief answer
- Calculate/find/solve — show your working out
- Explain — give a written reason for your answer

EXAMPLE:

Take a look at this exam question. There are plenty of ways to avoid losing easy marks.



11 The formula for the period, T seconds, of a pendulum of length l metres is given by:

$$T = 2\pi\sqrt{\frac{l}{g}}$$

At the equator, $g = 9.78$ m/s².

(a) Find the period of a pendulum, of length 30 cm, at the Equator. Give your answer to 3 significant figures.

$T =$ .... seconds

[2]

You're given a length in centimetres, but the formula uses lengths in metres. You need to convert 30 cm into metres.

The command word is 'find' so you need to show your working out.

Make sure you round your final answer to 3 significant figures.

You need to answer the question in seconds.

Check Your Answer Makes Sense

1) Make sure your answer is sensible — a person can't be 22 m tall.
2) Check for silly mistakes — 3 × 3 is not 6.
3) If you've solved an equation, put the answer back into the equation to see if it's correct.
4) Expand factorised brackets to check they give you the original expression.

I always check every page I write for chicken silly mistakes...

One of the (many) great things about GCSE Maths is that most questions have definite answers, meaning you can check whether you've got the right answer. Maths gets a bad rap sometimes, but it's actually very generous.

Science

You and revision probably have quite the chemistry now, so you'll be glad to hear there are things you can do as a pair to help with your science exams. Not that you two need an excuse to spend time together...

Match Pairs to Learn Key Terms

EXAMINER REPORT

1) You can miss out on marks by not understanding key scientific terms. The best way to avoid this is by learning these terms.
2) Write key terms and their definitions on separate pairs of cards. Then jumble and sort the pairs.
3) When you can sort them all, try recalling the definitions based on the term only.

Heart	Unit of Resistance	Universal Indicator Paper
Pumps blood around the body	Ohms	Shows how acidic or alkaline a solution is by changing colour

I have no Ohms

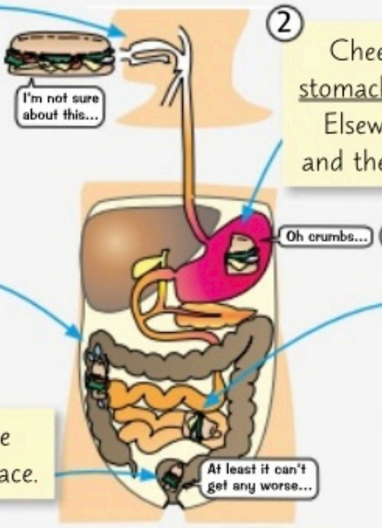
Remember Scientific Processes With Storyboarding

To help you remember processes with many steps, you could create stories.

EXAMPLE:

You could storyboard the digestive system like this:

You can't describe processes in an informal way like this in the exam — you need to use scientific language and terminology.


I'm not sure about this...
Oh crumbs...
At least it can't get any worse...

① Any starch in Cheesy the sandwich is first broken down by amylase enzymes in the saliva.

② Cheesy then plummets into the stomach where proteins are digested. Elsewhere, the liver produces bile and the pancreas produces enzymes.

③ As if things couldn't get worse, Cheesy is digested fully in the small intestine and absorbed into the blood.

④ The large intestine absorbs any excess water Cheesy has left.

⑤ Cheesy's remains end as faeces in the rectum, hopeful of going to a better place.

Science

Get to Grips with Practical Skills

Set aside time specifically for revising practical-related skills:

1) Learn the names of equipment and how to improve the quality of the data obtained.
2) Be familiar with how to record data — e.g. don't include units in the main body of a table.
3) Practise drawing graphs, using a ruler and sharp pencil for accuracy.

EXAMPLE:

Take a look at this practical skills exam question.

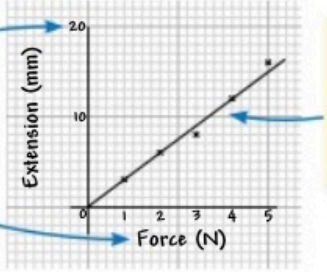
Be precise when drawing and reading graphs in the exam.

EXAMINER REPORT

3 A student investigates how a spring extends when a force is applied to it. They record their results in a table.

Force (N)	**1.00**	**2.00**	**3.00**	**4.00**	**5.00**
Extension (mm)	3	6	8	12	16

(a) Plot the results on the graph paper. Draw a line of best fit.



Sensible scale used.

Axes are clearly labelled with units.

Points and line of best fit plotted accurately with a sharp pencil.

[3]

Know Which Formulas You Need to Learn

1) You're only given some formulas in the exam — you need to learn the ones that aren't given.
2) Practise using every formula so you can use them all confidently in the exam.

Get Key Vocabulary into Your Answers

1) Marks are awarded for using correct terminology.
2) Make sure you learn key words and their meaning as part of your revision.
3) In the exam, check that you've used relevant scientific terms correctly.

I don't trust atoms — I hear they make everything up...

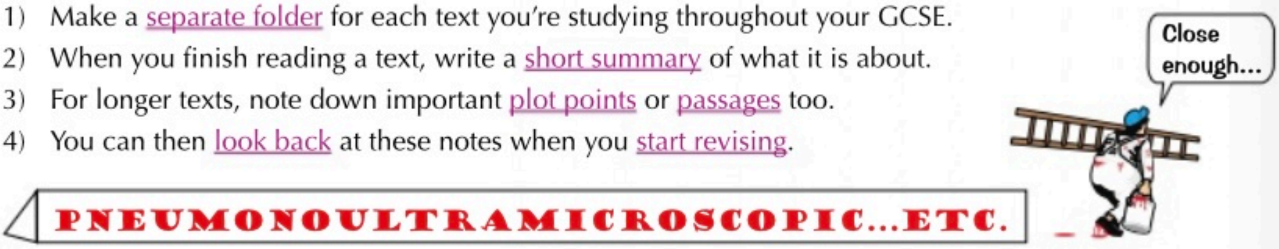
But you won't when you've revised properly — here's a pretty useful formula to start you off: GO$_2$D PL4N$_2$ING.

English Literature

Fun fact — pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis is the longest word you'll find in a dictionary. Fortunately, revising for your English Literature exam isn't nearly as daunting as trying to write that word.

Organise Your Revision for Each Text

1) Make a separate folder for each text you're studying throughout your GCSE.
2) When you finish reading a text, write a short summary of what it is about.
3) For longer texts, note down important plot points or passages too.
4) You can then look back at these notes when you start revising.


Close enough...
PNEUMONOULTRAMICROSCOPIC...ETC.

Get to Know a Text with Cue Cards

1) Cue cards have more information than flash cards and are used for quick reference.
2) For every text you study, make the following cue cards:

Card	Details
List of Characters	*Names and brief description of who's who.*
Main Characters	*List each main character's characteristics and a quote that sums them up.*
Themes	*Include key points and quotes.*
Context and Audience	*When and why the text was written, and how the context affects the text.*
Writer's language	*Language techniques used by the writer and quotes that show these being used.*

Much Ado About Nothing

Beatrice:

- Witty/Intelligent
- Outspoken
- Confident
- Loyal to Hero
- Annoyed by gender stereotypes
- Reluctant to marry

"she mocks all her wooers out of suit"

A Christmas Carol

Theme — Family:

- Happiness — Belle's family full of **"joy, and gratitude"**.
- Loneliness — Scrooge was **"a solitary child"**.
- Scrooge's change — becomes a **"second father"** to Tiny Tim.

Make sure you only answer questions on the texts you've studied.

3) You can use cue cards to revise a text in different ways:
   - Read a set of cards for a different text frequently, e.g. each day.
   - Put the cards somewhere you'll see them, e.g. on the fridge.
   - Get a friend or family member to test you using your cards.

EXAMINER REPORT

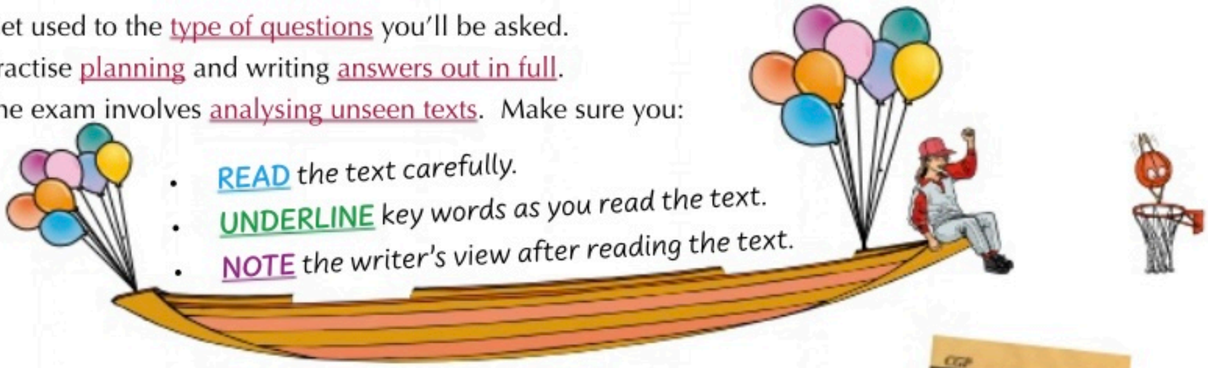
To help you get higher marks in the exam, refer to a variety of writer's techniques — structure, symbolism, tone, etc. Make sure you include a wide range of techniques in your cue cards.

English Language

Language is a super word — there aren't many words that end in 'uage'. Jejune is also a great word — it means uninteresting, but this page isn't jejune. It's anti-jejune, jejuneless, jejune-free. I could go on...*

Read (and do) Practice Papers

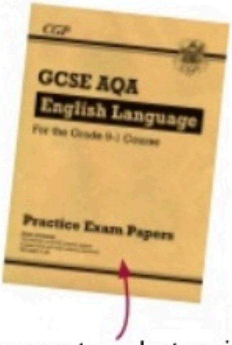
1) Get used to the type of questions you'll be asked.
2) Practise planning and writing answers out in full.
3) The exam involves analysing unseen texts. Make sure you:



- READ the text carefully.
- UNDERLINE key words as you read the text.
- NOTE the writer's view after reading the text.

4) You'll need to show the following skills when answering questions:

- Write critically and clearly
- "Use quotes to back up your points"
- Analyse language, form and structure
- Show you understand how context affects the text



CGP

GCSE AQA

English Language

For the Grade 9-1 Course

Practice Exam Papers

5) You can find past papers for your exam board online. (CGP do some practice papers too. Just sayin'...)

Do Some Creative Writing to Prepare for the Exam

Look at past papers for writing prompts to get your creative juices bubbling.

1) You need to practise writing both fiction and non-fiction texts.
2) Practise writing for different audiences and purposes too. For example:

Write an article for a broadsheet newspaper in which you explain your point of view.

Write a speech for a debate at your school in which you argue for or against a statement.

3) To get top marks, your writing needs to be interesting, accurate and well organised. This includes using a variety of techniques, such as figurative language and rhetorical devices, throughout your writing.
4) Get someone to read your writing so you can get feedback.

EXAMINER REPORT

*This page is jemarch, jeapril, jemay, but absolutely not jejune...

Be aware that English Literature and English Language exams have different question types. You don't want to spend weeks practising writing *A Christmas Carol* fan fiction when you won't get asked to write one in either exam.

History

My teacher told me everything in GCSE History was in the past, so imagine my surprise when I found out that the exam was actually in the future. I got by though, and you can too with these handy tips.

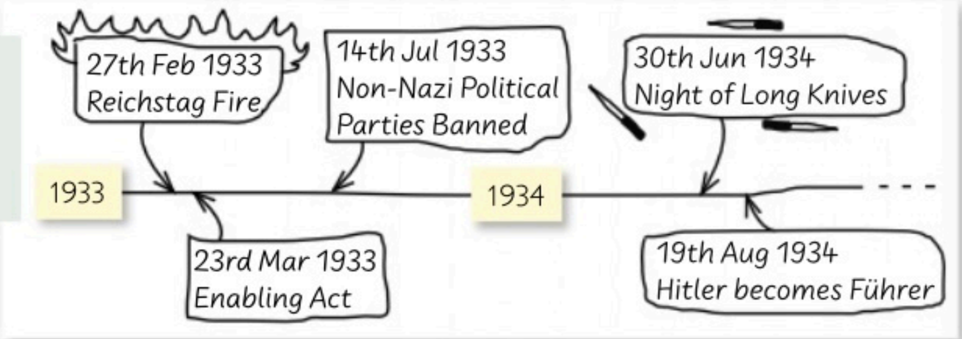
Use Timelines to Revise Events

1) When answering questions, you need to be able to say when events happened.
2) Make a timeline to help you learn the order of events, e.g. for battles or new laws.
3) Draw pictures on your timeline as a way to remember key events.

EXAMPLE:

This is a timeline of the events leading to Hitler becoming Führer.

Learn what happened in each event too.


27th Feb 1933
Reichstag Fire
14th Jul 1933
Non-Nazi Political Parties Banned
30th Jun 1934
Night of Long Knives
1933
1934
23rd Mar 1933
Enabling Act
19th Aug 1934
Hitler becomes Führer

Revise the Causes and Consequences of Events

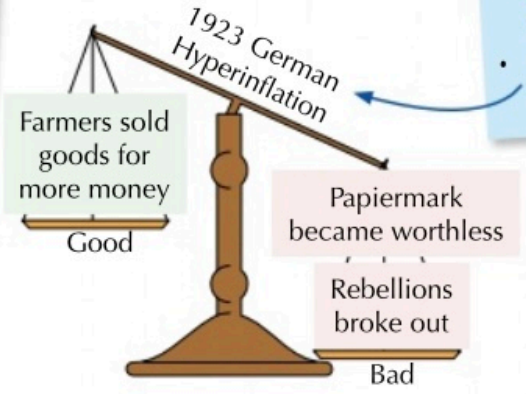
It's not enough to know what happened for each topic — you need to know why the event happened (the causes) and what happened after the event (the consequences).

Causes

- Think about which causes were more important/less important, e.g. reasons for a war.
- Consider the short-term and long-term causes.
- Think about a range of different causes for an event, e.g. social, political, financial.

Consequences

- Write down two or three things that changed because of an event.
- Rank these things in order of importance.
- Decide if the event was mainly good or bad.


1923 German Hyperinflation
Farmers sold goods for more money
Good
Papiermark became worthless
Rebellions broke out
Bad

History

Tailor Your Answer to the Question

1) In the exam, double check the topic and dates mentioned in each question.
2) If the question asks about a date range, focus your answer on those years.
3) Be sure to answer the question and make it the right length for the number of marks available — writing a longer answer than you need to is a waste of precious exam time.
4) Back up each point you make with facts and details. For example:

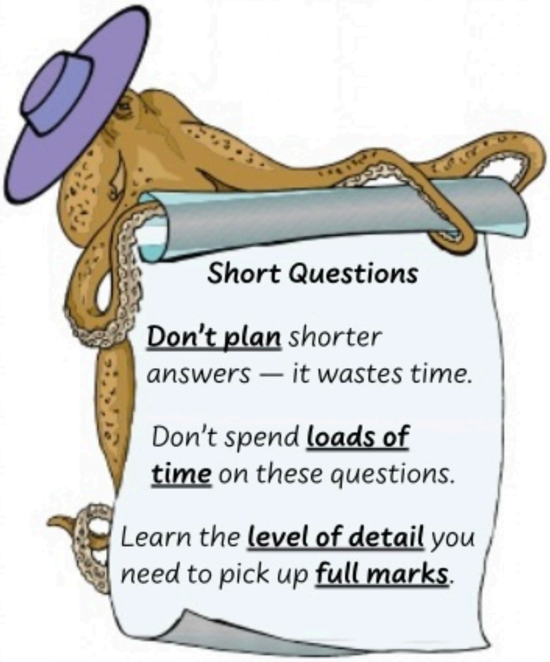
EXAMINER REPORT

> Life was hard for African Americans in 1920s America because segregation was widespread and many could not vote.

Know the Different Question Types

In the exam, make sure you answer the right number of questions — and on the right topics.

1) Some questions in the exam require longer answers than others.
2) Questions worth a few marks only need a short answer.
3) Spend most of your time on long-answer questions which are worth more marks.

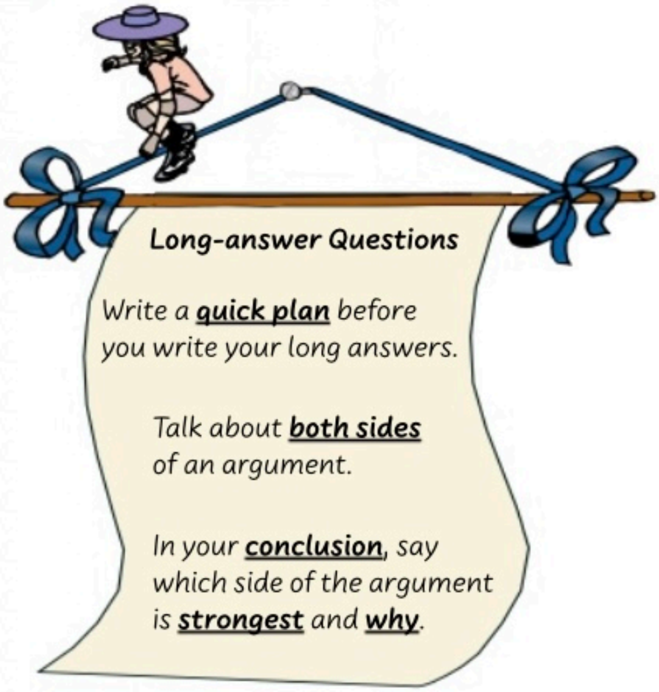


Short Questions

__Don't plan__ shorter answers — it wastes time.

Don't spend __loads of time__ on these questions.

Learn the __level of detail__ you need to pick up __full marks__.



Long-answer Questions

Write a __quick plan__ before you write your long answers.

Talk about __both sides__ of an argument.

In your __conclusion__, say which side of the argument is __strongest__ and __why__.

Knowing the usefulness of a source is another important skill — see page 14 for how to do this.

Double agents are like History answers — they talk about both sides...

Unlike spies though, your responses to long-answer questions shouldn't be subtle about mentioning both sides. Remember to include facts to back up your points and keep your answer focused on the topic and time period stated.

Geography

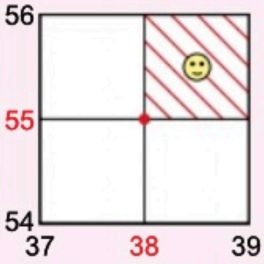
You're in for a world of fun now — these pages will help 'Geog' your memory before you tackle the exams.

Make Sure Your Map Skills are Strong

1) It's likely that Ordnance Survey® maps will appear in an exam. You need to know how to use eastings and northings to reference squares on a map grid:
    - Eastings increase as you move east.
    - Northings increase as you move north.
    - Always write the eastings value first.
2) You also need to be able to work out the distance between two places on a map:
    - Use a ruler to measure the distance between the places in centimetres.
    - Compare your measurement to the scale to get the distance in kilometres.

EXAMPLE:

Give the four figure grid reference of the smiley face.



Four figure grid references give you a square.

- Find the eastings value for the left edge of the square the smiley is in — 38.
- Find the northings value for the bottom edge of the square — 55.
- So the reference is 3855.

You'll Need to be Able to Discuss Photos and Graphs

Picking Apart Pictures

When describing a photo like the one on the right, go into detail:

Name features (e.g. beaches, cliffs and arches).

Describe specific features (e.g. how they were formed).

You might even be asked to describe processes that could be taking place in the photo (e.g. weathering or coastal erosion).

EXAMPLE:

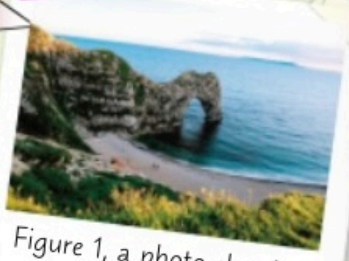
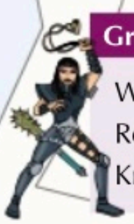


Figure 1, a photo showing part of the Dorset coast in the UK.

Grappling with Graphs



When describing graphs, always refer to data from the graph.

Remember — a line of best fit shows a trend.

Know that scatter graphs can show +ve or -ve correlation.

Geography

Be Prepared for Higher Mark Questions

Some questions in your Geography exam ask you to write a bit more (for a few more marks).

Use ADELE to remind you about what to include in your longer answers:

A — Accurate knowledge (facts and figures)
D — Detailed Understanding (make it clear that you 'get it')
E — Examples (include specific, relevant examples)
L — Links (use conjunctions, e.g. however, additionally, although...)
E — Evaluations (give your opinion or judgement)

Some longer answers will ask you to talk about Case Studies — see page 15 for how to manage these.

Don't Forget to Use the Right Terminology

1) Make sure you use the correct terminology and technical terms for processes.
2) It's important that you understand what key terms mean so that you can use them correctly in the exam.

You can miss out on marks if you don't know or use terminology correctly.

EXAMINER REPORT

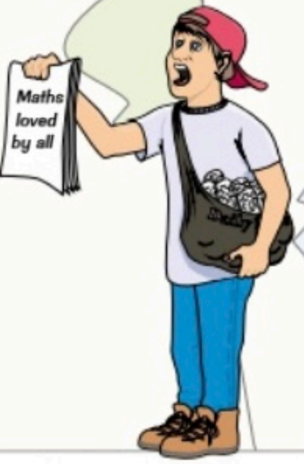
Be Familiar with Maths

1) Some questions might ask you to use maths, so you need to know how to figure out:

- MODE = MOST common
- MEDIAN = MIDDLE value (when values are in order of size)
- MEAN = TOTAL of items ÷ NUMBER of items
- RANGE = DIFFERENCE between highest and lowest

2) You also need to be able to calculate percentages and percentage change:

- PERCENTAGE = (Part of Sample ÷ Total Sample) × 100
- PERCENTAGE CHANGE = $\frac{\text{Final value - original value}}{\text{original value}} \times 100$



What is central to understanding Geography? The letter 'r'...

Geography tests you on a wide range of skills, so you'll have to become familiar with all sorts in order to do your best in your exams. It's not all bad though — chances are you'll get plenty of nice pictures to look at...

Languages

Revising for a language exam can feel like... well... learning a foreign language. But don't worry, there are lots of tips on these pages to have you chatting away like a native speaker.

Get To Know Your Vocab

Make sure you learn linking words, like 'but' and 'because', and prepositions, like 'in' or 'above' — this will help you come up with natural-sounding sentences.

EXAMINER REPORT

Learning the vocab is really important, but you don't need to spend hours staring at vocabulary lists:

Turn your house into a dictionary

- Label items in your home, such as rooms or furniture.

Make flashcards

- Write the vocab on one side of the card and the English word or a picture on the other side.
- Ask friends or family to test you.

Use your voice

- Say the vocab out loud to yourself or a friend.
- You could record yourself and then play it back.

Use Verb Tables to Learn Different Tenses

Verb tables are a great way to easily see the verb endings for different tenses.

Subject	Past	Present	Future
I			
You (sing)			
He/She/It			
We			
You (pl)			
They			

Make a table for each type of verb ending — pick a regular verb for each ending to use as an example.

Create blank copies of your table and test yourself by filling them out from memory — you could practise using different verbs.

Focus on Specific Verbs

Make a note of verbs you struggle to remember or often get wrong — irregular verbs tend to be the trickiest.

Make a verb table for each irregular verb. Use a different colour for the conjugations you find difficult, e.g. the verb 'dar' in Spanish:

Practise writing sentences using these verbs in different tenses — check the conjugations using your verb tables.

Subject	Present
I	doy
You (sing)	das
He/She/It	da
We	damos
You (pl)	dais
They	dan

Languages

Have The Examiner in the PALM of Your Hand

Take a look at past papers on your exam board website to see what kinds of photos are used.

In the speaking exam, you'll be given a photo to describe, with questions. You can practise for the speaking exam by describing pictures:

1) Use the PALM acronym to note down vocabulary to describe what is happening in the picture.
2) Use this vocabulary to describe the picture to a friend or family member — this step is important as you'll have to say it out loud in the speaking exam.

P = People
Who is in the picture?

A = Activity
What are they doing?

L = Location
Where are they?

M = Mood
How are they feeling?

Practise Useful Phrases

It's important to learn topic vocab, but there are more general words and phrases that will help you in the exams too. Spend some time making and learning lists of different expressions that will allow you to pick up easy marks:

Opinion words: e.g. 'I think...', 'I believe...', 'Personally...'.

Time expressions: e.g. 'tomorrow', 'last year', 'next weekend'.

Conjunctions: e.g. 'therefore', 'but', 'because', 'consequently'.

Comparisons: e.g. 'more than', 'less than', 'the same as', 'on the other hand', 'in contrast'.

Make sure you're really familiar with common question words so you know what you're being asked.

EXAMINER REPORT

I used the past, present and future in my language exam — it was intense...

Nothing else needs to be though — "bye bye tense, hello calm" (also PALM, don't forget PALM...). Don't panic if there's a word or phrase you don't recognise straight away — just see if you can use the context to work it out.

Religious Studies

You're unlikely to be asked to write an answer evaluating the ethical statement 'It's always good to revise', but it's something I'm sure we can agree on. Continue your path to revision enlightenment with this page.

Learn Beliefs and Practices in Detail

When revising religious beliefs and practices, get used to doing these three things:

① Explain what the belief means.

② Link the belief to a teaching or quote.

③ Explain why the belief is significant to religious people today.

EXAMPLE:

Here's how you might revise a religious belief:

Belief → *Christians believe humans are made in God's image.*

What it means → *Christians believe God made all humans like Him, so everyone is important.*

Quote / Teaching → *In Genesis 1:26, God said "Let us make mankind in our image".*

Significance Today → *Christians may support charities which tackle inequality, because they believe that every person is valuable and should be treated with respect.*

Debate Ethical Questions

1) With a friend or family member, decide on an ethical statement, e.g. 'The death penalty is always wrong'.
2) Toss a coin to decide who is in favour and who is against the statement.
3) Take two minutes each to put forward established arguments for or against it.
4) Turn it into a game — give points for examples, religious teachings and key terms.

Learn to Tackle Long-Answer Questions

EXAMINER REPORT

1) To get high marks, your long answers need to give balanced viewpoints and refer to religion.
2) Remember that there are often differences of opinion within a religion, e.g. Protestants and Catholics hold different viewpoints on different topics.
3) Use precise examples, e.g. 'An example of natural evil is natural disasters, such as hurricane Katrina.'
4) Long answers should have a conclusion, where you can give your opinion on what you've discussed.

I've tried provoking fish into arguments — they never take debate...

You'll end up revising a lot of serious ethical topics — try debating something light-hearted for a laugh, like 'cows are the best farm animal to take ice fishing' (I'd hate to argue against that one...).

Business Studies

I had this great idea to open hundreds of coffee shops which sold fancy-named drinks to people who liked being on their laptop in public. I couldn't get a financial backer though — something about competitors...

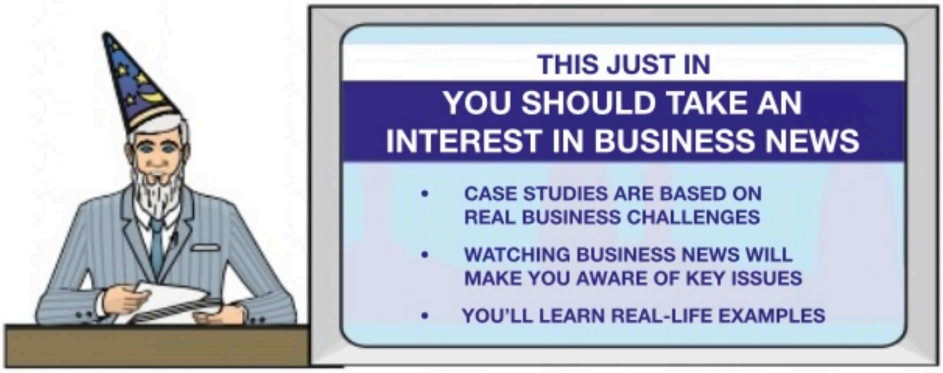
Learn Key Business Definitions

1) Learn business definitions, particularly for the multiple-choice questions.
2) Longer questions may also give a mark for knowledge of key terms.
3) The best way to learn these definitions is using flash cards (see p.23).

Make sure you're familiar with the different command words that come up so you know what you're being asked to do.

Read Case Studies Carefully

1) For questions that are based on case study information or on data, make sure you use evidence from the case study or data set as well as your knowledge of Business in your answer.
2) Before you get started, read the case study and any data all the way through. Then read the whole question carefully and make sure you've understood what you're being asked to do.
3) If you're asked to evaluate something, make sure you produce a balanced argument that discusses the positives and negatives, even if you then come to a conclusion supporting one side.



THIS JUST IN

YOU SHOULD TAKE AN INTEREST IN BUSINESS NEWS

- CASE STUDIES ARE BASED ON REAL BUSINESS CHALLENGES
- WATCHING BUSINESS NEWS WILL MAKE YOU AWARE OF KEY ISSUES
- YOU'LL LEARN REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

Practise Your Maths Skills

1) Maths crops up a fair bit — you need to be able to do the following:
   - Use maths in a business context, e.g. calculating the average rate of return.
   - Interpret data and draw graphs, e.g. reading or plotting a total revenue line.
   - Use formulas, e.g. to calculate the break-even point.
2) In an exam, show your workings and any formulas used — this may get you marks.
3) Make sure you give your answer to the number of decimal places that the question asks for.

EXAMINER REPORT

Before the Exam

It's what this whole book has been preparing you for — the big exam day. However, to make sure you're in tip-top exam-slamming condition, here are some last-minute things you can do.

Do Final Preparations the Night Before

Spend time the night before the exam making sure you're prepared:

1) Eat a balanced meal (see p.9).
2) Get anything you're taking into the exam ready to go.
3) Double check where and when your exam is.
4) Do something relaxing or some gentle exercise.
5) You could read over some notes, but don't cram all night.
6) Try to get a good night's sleep (see p.9).

Exam Kit Checklist

- *Multiple pens and pencils* ☑
- *A rubber and sharpener* ☑
- *A clear pencil case* ☑
- *A clear water bottle with no labels* ☑
- *Subject-specific stationery, e.g. ruler, calculator, etc.* ☑

Wake Up at a Sensible Time

Set an alarm to make sure you wake up.

1) Give yourself time to wake up and get ready for your exam.
2) Eat a healthy breakfast, e.g. a bowl of porridge, fruit and a glass of water.
3) If you have time, look over your notes at any key definitions, formulas, facts and quotes.
4) Don't revise anything new — save your energy for the exam.

Arrive at Your Exam in Plenty of Time

1) Leave home with more time than you need to get to your exam.
2) But try not to arrive too early — you don't want a long, nervous wait.

Waiting with other people

If people outside the exam hall seem stressed when you arrive, try to stay calm and not let their worries affect you. It's okay to ask to be left alone if that's what you need to mentally prepare yourself.

I brought pens to my exam — I couldn't take the sheep and pigs in though...

If you struggle to get a good night's sleep or eat a big breakfast because you're nervous, don't panic — it's not the end of the world. You can still perform well in your exam as long as you keep calm and stay focused.

During the Exam

Whenever I entered an exam hall and took my seat, I always imagined an orchestra playing an epic soundtrack as if it was the climax of an action movie. I also did other, more helpful things too...

Organise Your Desk Space

While you're waiting for the exam to start:

1) Get your pens and stationery out.
2) Place your water bottle on your desk.
3) Take some deep breaths to calm yourself.
4) Fill in the front of your exam paper.
5) Listen to instructions given by the invigilators.

Focus on What You're Doing During the Exam

1) Read each question carefully.
2) Read each question carefully — seriously, you might miss something if you rush.
3) Answer every question that you need to — and don't answer any that you don't.
4) If you're not sure of an answer, make an educated guess.
5) Keep an eye on the time so you stay on track. There should be a clock at the front of the exam hall, so you shouldn't need to take a watch.
6) Judge how long to spend on a question based on how many marks it's worth.
7) Don't get distracted by what others are doing.

Give yourself time to check your answers.

Dealing with FEPs (Frequent Exam Panics)

☆ ***If you can't answer a question...***
Move on to the next question and come back to it later.

☆ ***If you're running out of time...***
Answer questions which require short answers to pick up as many marks as possible.

☆ ***If you realise halfway through a question that you've got it wrong...***
Cross out what you've done and write your new answer beneath it.

☆ ***If you realise that cake you left on the side is at the mercy of your sibling...***
Silently bid farewell to your lost dessert and then refocus on the exam.

After the Exam

Whether it's the first exam or the fifteenth, and whether you think it went well or not, congratulate yourself on getting a step closer to the end. All that's left to know is what to do after you step out of that exam hall.

Worrying Won't Change Anything

1) You might find it stressful to talk to friends about the exam — it's okay if you don't want to.
2) Try not to worry about your answers — you can't change what you wrote in the exam.
3) Learn from the experience for future exams. For example:

If you ran out of time, think about how you could manage your time differently.

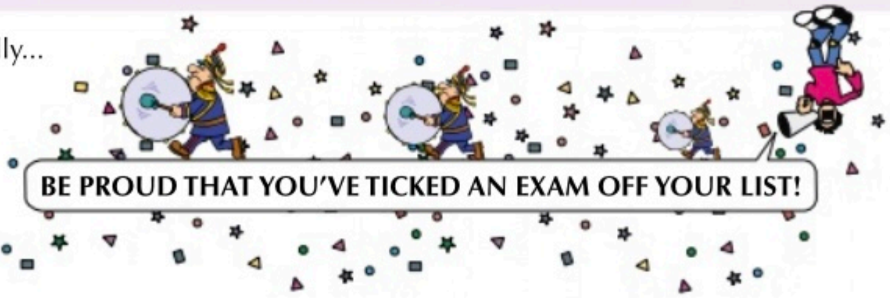
If you felt tired, consider how to improve your routine the night before.

Take Some Time Out to Relax

1) Exams are tiring — try to relax after the exam or do something fun.
2) If you're feeling frustrated or anxious, doing some exercise could help.
3) If you have another exam later the same day or the next day:

- You may want to have a quick look over some notes.
- But be sure to have a break between looking at any notes and the exam.
- Don't forget any final preparations for the next exam (see p.44).

4) And finally...


BE PROUD THAT YOU'VE TICKED AN EXAM OFF YOUR LIST!

~~Scream and Dance Around~~ Unwind After Your Last Exam

1) When all your exams are over, store your revision notes out of sight (but don't throw them away).
2) Celebrate your hard work — have a nice dinner, go on a trip or spend time with friends.

To fill the revision-shaped hole in my life, I memorised cereal ingredients...

Try to put exams to the back of your mind and not worry about results day. Enjoy the well-earned free time you have, maybe by learning a new party trick — wholegrain wheat, sugar, barley, salt, iron, vitamin B6...

Make A Revision Timetable

The last part of this book is a revision planner (our plan A for this section was a personal assistant, but we couldn't find one who would fit). It'll help you get organised and as ready as can be for all your revision.

Your revision planner and timetable can be found on pages 53-85 of this book. There are spaces for you to fill in all of your exams, other commitments and planned revision sessions.

1) Write Down when all your Exams are

- Fill in the Exam Timetable on page 53. If you don't know your exam dates when you start revising, fill this in when you do.
- You should refer to this regularly, so you can see at-a-glance which exams you've got coming up. It'll help you stay focused.

EXAMPLE:

Exam Timetable

Subject	Paper	Date	Time
Maths	Paper 1 (non calc)	May 15th (Mon)	9:00
Biology	Paper 1	May 17th (Wed)	14:00
French	Reading	May 22nd (Mon)	14:00
French	Listening	May 23rd (Tues)	9:00

2) Break each Subject Down into Topics

- Fill in the Topic Planners on pages 54-68 for each of your subjects (see below).
- Look at the exam board specification for each subject to find a list of topics, or ask your teachers.
- Put a tick in the correct column to show how happy you are with each topic. Throughout your revision, update the table as you feel more confident.
- Make sure you do enough revision and practice so that you're happy with each topic.

Don't worry if you're unsure about a lot of your topics at first. The whole point of revision is that you get more confident as you go on.

EXAMPLE:

Biology

Topic	☹	😐	😊
Cells	✓		
Microscopy	✓		
Cell Differentiation and Specialisation	✓	✓	
Stem Cells	✓		
Chromosomes and Mitosis	✓		
Binary Fission	✓	✓	
Culturing Microorganisms	✓		

Make A Revision Timetable

3) Start Filling in your Revision Timetable

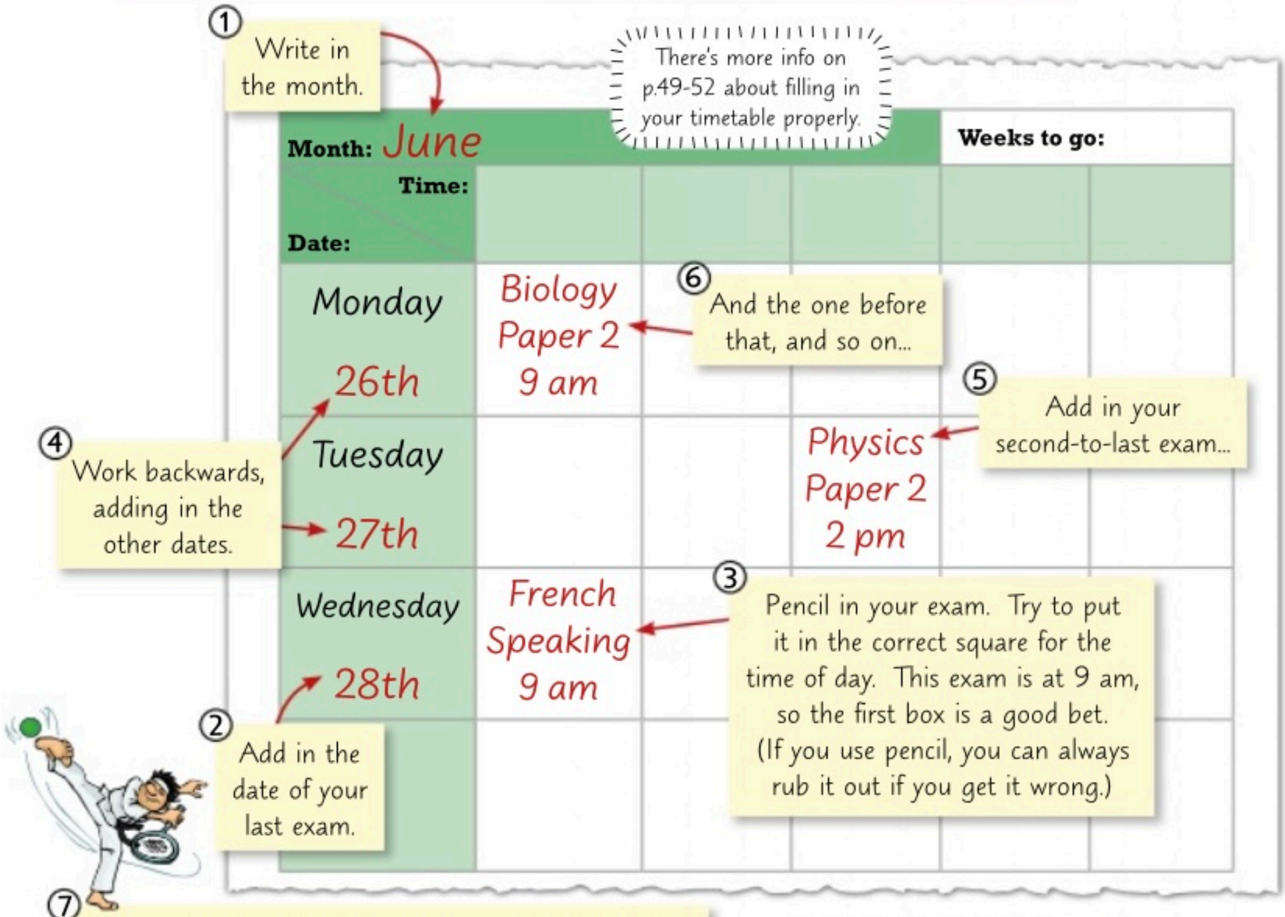
- Write down all your exams in the correct days on your timetable.
- Start from the end — write down your last exam on the last page of the timetable, then work backwards, filling in the dates and other exams until you get to your first exam.
- Use pencil rather than pen so you can amend it later if you need to.

Scan the QR code for a video showing you how to fill in the paper timetable as well as extra PDF timetables.

Paper Timetable Extras

EXAMPLE:

Say your last exam is French Speaking, on the morning of Wednesday 28th June. You'd follow the instructions shown below, in the correct order.



There's more info on p.49-52 about filling in your timetable properly.

Month: June				**Weeks to go:**	
Time: **Date:**					
Monday 26th	Biology Paper 2 9 am				
Tuesday 27th			Physics Paper 2 2 pm		
Wednesday 28th	French Speaking 9 am				

① Write in the month.

② Add in the date of your last exam.

③ Pencil in your exam. Try to put it in the correct square for the time of day. This exam is at 9 am, so the first box is a good bet. (If you use pencil, you can always rub it out if you get it wrong.)

④ Work backwards, adding in the other dates.

⑤ Add in your second-to-last exam...

⑥ And the one before that, and so on...

⑦ Once you've done the last page, move to the previous page. Carefully working backwards, fill in all the dates next to Sun, Sat, Fri etc.

Continue backwards, dating the pages until you get to the date you're starting your revision. (Just make sure you use the correct number of days for each month.)

You can fill in an online timetable if you prefer — scan the QR code for the timetable and a video talking you through how to use it.

Online Timetable

Make A Revision Timetable

It might seem like a lot of organisation that isn't getting any of the subject stuff in your head, but good planning now will save all sorts of time later — time that can be spent, y'know, revising.

4) Divide Your Time Into Sessions

1) The revision timetables in this book are split into five sessions per day, but you can add other dividing lines too. The time spaces have been left blank so that you can choose them yourself.
2) To help you divide your day into revision sessions, think about:
    - what time of day you work best
    - when you get up and go to bed
    - how long you'll revise each day
    - fitting in sensible breaks
3) It's up to you how long each session is.
4) You don't need to use every session each day — you'll be in school some days, so cramming five revision sessions into the evening will probably be too much. Your timetable will be different at the weekends compared to weekdays and during the holidays compared to during term time.

A good rule of thumb is to break for 10 minutes every hour — either in one chunk, or split into two 5-minute breaks.

5) Fill In Your Commitments

You can't revise all the time — you need to keep time for your other commitments. Your revision could become stressful if you overload yourself (see p.6-8 for advice on this).

1) Go through your revision timetable, adding in the time for things like:
    - hobbies and regular exercise
    - holidays and birthdays
    - time with friends and family
    - part-time jobs
2) It's also a good idea to keep some time free in your plan in case something unexpected comes up — there may be things that you can't plan for, so if there are a few gaps, it'll make it easy to adapt.

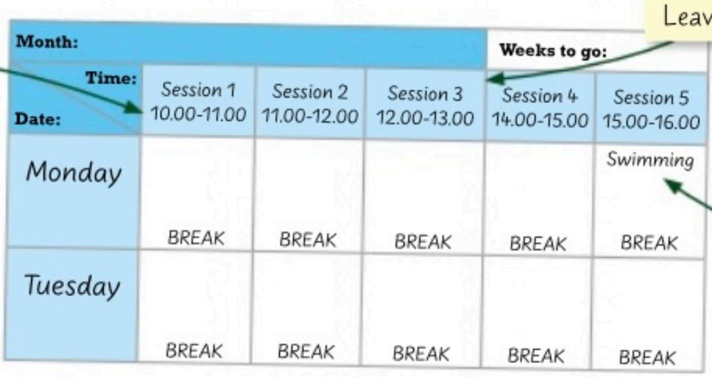
You may need to cut back on some though — revision is still your priority.

EXAMPLE:

This timetable uses 50-minute revision sessions, with 10-minute breaks after each one.

Start at a sensible time, based on your daily routine.

Leave a gap for lunch.



Month:				**Weeks to go:**	
Time: **Date:**	Session 1 10.00-11.00	Session 2 11.00-12.00	Session 3 12.00-13.00	Session 4 14.00-15.00	Session 5 15.00-16.00
Monday	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	Swimming BREAK
Tuesday	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK

Add your commitments and activities.

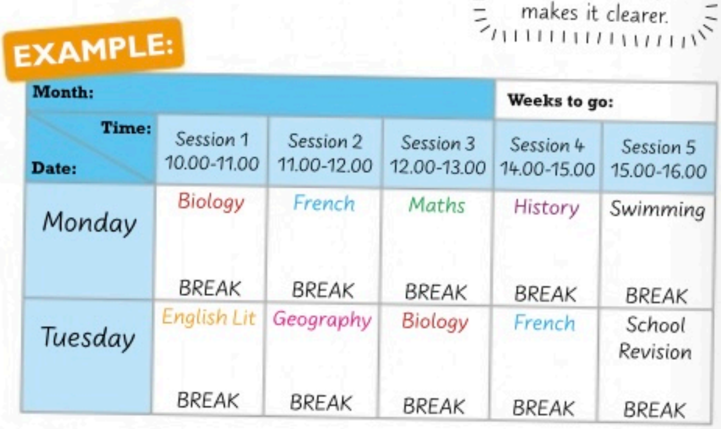
Make A Revision Timetable

6) Add Your Subjects

1) Decide how much time you'll need to spend on each subject by thinking about:
   - which you find the hardest
   - which have more content
   - which you will be examined on first
2) Add your subjects into the timetable, working backwards from the exam.
3) Add in any revision sessions your school has organised that you plan to go to too.
4) Make sure you allow enough time for each subject and space them out over the time you have (see p.51 for more on this).

Colour-coding your timetable by subject makes it clearer.

EXAMPLE:



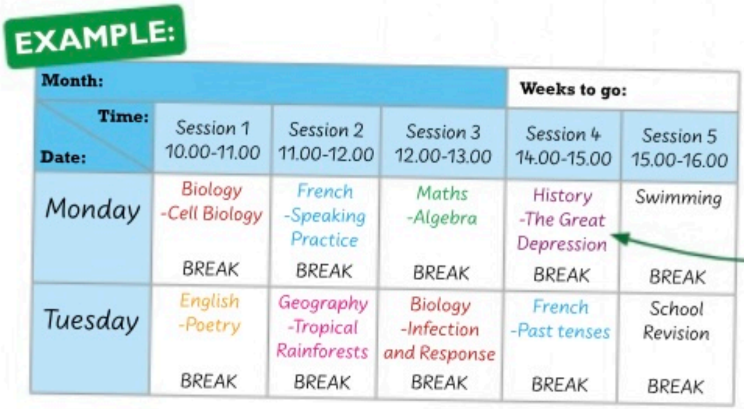
Month:				**Weeks to go:**	
Time: **Date:**	Session 1 10.00-11.00	Session 2 11.00-12.00	Session 3 12.00-13.00	Session 4 14.00-15.00	Session 5 15.00-16.00
Monday	Biology BREAK	French BREAK	Maths BREAK	History BREAK	Swimming BREAK
Tuesday	English Lit BREAK	Geography BREAK	Biology BREAK	French BREAK	School Revision BREAK

7) Add Your Topics

1) For each subject, look at the topics in your topic planner — think about which you should prioritise (like you did with your subjects) and add those first.
2) Aim to include topics multiple times to give you a chance to revise them thoroughly and more concisely each time, e.g. by using a range of the techniques covered in Section 3 (p.17-29).
3) Make sure you leave plenty of space for all your topics — you might want to write in pencil to start with.

You don't have to do this step straight away — you might prefer to fill in the topics at the start of each week once you know how you're getting on. Don't be afraid to edit your timetable as you go along, depending on what's going well and what you feel less confident with. Just make sure you leave enough time to cover every topic in enough detail.

EXAMPLE:



Month:				**Weeks to go:**	
Time: **Date:**	Session 1 10.00-11.00	Session 2 11.00-12.00	Session 3 12.00-13.00	Session 4 14.00-15.00	Session 5 15.00-16.00
Monday	Biology -Cell Biology BREAK	French -Speaking Practice BREAK	Maths -Algebra BREAK	History -The Great Depression BREAK	Swimming BREAK
Tuesday	English -Poetry BREAK	Geography -Tropical Rainforests BREAK	Biology -Infection and Response BREAK	French -Past tenses BREAK	School Revision BREAK

Add topic detail under each subject.

Space It Out and Mix It Up

Think About Spacing As You Plan Your Revision

Revisiting a topic several times, with gaps in between, is more effective than trying to revise it all in one go. It helps the information sink in better so that it's easier to remember in the exam.

① Space out your revision for a topic across the time you have available — make sure you leave enough time to go over a topic more than once.

② Don't be tempted to cram a whole subject into a day — your revision won't be as effective.

③ It's okay to cover different topics from the same subject on the same day, just make sure you don't do it too often — keep your revision varied to keep your brain engaged.

Make Sure You Mix Your Subjects Up

1) Include a good mix of subjects every day — don't cover all your languages or sciences in one go.
2) Split your revision of each subject into short, focused chunks spread over different days and several weeks — leaving a gap between them will help you retain the information better.
3) It's not a good idea to spend a week revising just Maths and then a week on English — the information just won't stay in your brain in the long-term.

This example spaces subjects out well and mixes them up, with regular gaps in between. You'd just need to add in your topics and short breaks...

EXAMPLE:

Month:				**Weeks to go:**	
Time **Date**	Session 1 10.00-11.00	Session 2 11.00-12.00	Session 3 12.00-13.00	Session 4 14.00-15.00	Session 5 15.00-16.00
Monday	Biology	French	Maths	History	Swimming
Tuesday	English Lit	Geography	Biology	French	History
Wednesday	Maths	Run with Dad	Spanish	English Lit	Physics
Thursday	← Trip to town →			Chemistry	History
Friday	French	English Lit	Physics	English Lang	Maths
Saturday	History	Swimming	Spanish	Chemistry	Physics
Sunday	Tennis	Chemistry	English Lang	Spanish	English Lit

My timetables are so good, people call me a revisionary...

Oh come on, that was a good one. Speaking of good ones, you should have a pretty gosh darn good timetable in front of you by this point. Just a couple more things before you go...

Checking Your Revision Timetable

Hey, you, I see you about to skip this page — before you race off excitedly to start using your shiny new timetable, it's a good idea to spend a few minutes checking you haven't anything important.

Check Your Timetable

1) Run through the checklist below and compare each point with your timetable.
2) If there's anything missing, go back and fill it in. Use the online videos (see p.48) to make sure you haven't forgotten anything important.

1. *Have you included all your exams for every subject?* ☐
2. *Have you added in topics for at least the first few weeks?* ☐
3. *Have you double-checked the dates?* ☐
4. *Does the timetable cover a mixture of subjects each day?* ☐
5. *Have you planned in regular breaks?* ☐
6. *Have you left time for things you enjoy doing?* ☐
7. *Have you left a few gaps to change things if you need to?* ☐

Stick To Your Timetable — but be Flexible

It's all well and good making yourself a great timetable, but it's no use to you unless you follow it.

1) Use your revision timetable alongside your topic planners to keep track of your progress.
2) Don't be afraid to adapt the plan as you go — if you know your German tense endings better than you thought but need to spend more time on quadratic equations, just swap things around as you need to.
3) If something doesn't go to plan one day, don't panic — just fit any missed revision into the gaps you've left in the timetable and carry on.

Exam Timetable

Subject	Paper	Date	Time

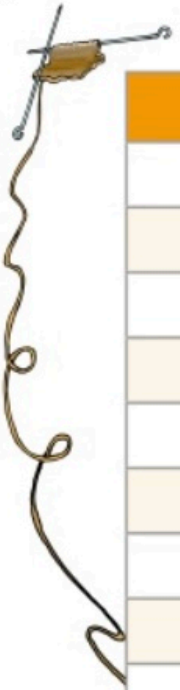
Subject: Maths

We've started this topic planner for you, you lucky thing, so just grab your notes and finish it off.

Topic	☹	🙂	😉
Multiples, Factors & Primes			
Fractions			
Decimals			
Percentages			
Rounding & Estimating			
Powers & Roots			
Multiplying out brackets			
Factorising			
Surds			

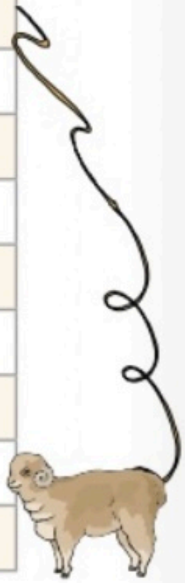
Subject: ____________________

Topic	☹	🙂	😉



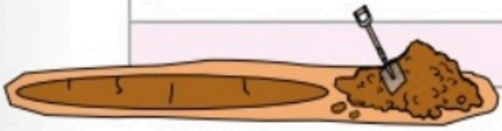
Subject: ________________

Topic	😟	🙂	😉



Subject: ______________

Topic	☹	🙂	😉



Subject: ______________

Topic	😟	🙂	😉

Subject: ______________

Topic	☹	🙂	😉

Subject: ________________

Topic	🙁	🙂	😉

Subject: ________________

Topic	☹	🙂	😉

Subject: ______________

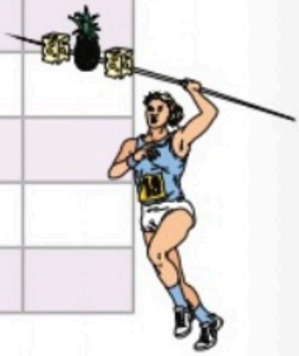
Topic	😟	🙂	😉

Subject: ______________

Topic	☹	🙂	😉

Subject: ________________

Topic	🙁	🙂	😉



Subject: ______________

Topic	☹	🙂	😉

Subject: ________________

Topic	😕	🙂	😉

Subject: ____________________

Topic	🙁	🙂	😉

Subject: _______________

Topic	☹	🙂	😉

Revision Timetable

You can fill in your timetable online if you prefer (see p.48).

Month:				**Weeks to go:**	
Time: / **Date:**					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Revision Timetable

Month:				**Weeks to go:**	
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Revision Timetable

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Revision Timetable

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Revision Timetable

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Revision Timetable

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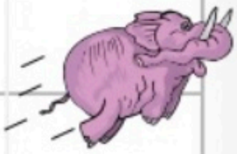

Revision Timetable

Month:				**Weeks to go:**	
Time: / **Date:**					
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Revision Timetable

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Revision Timetable

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Revision Timetable

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Revision Timetable

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Revision Timetable

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Revision Timetable

Month:				Weeks to go:	
Time: Date:					
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Saturday					
Sunday					

Revision Timetable

Month:				**Weeks to go:**	
Time: / **Date:**					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Top 10 Ultimate Revision Tips

Here are the absolute must-know, save-your-life-in-a-fight-with-a-zombie-exam-paper, ultimate revision tips.

- Start revising as soon as possible.
- Plan your revision using a timetable.
- Set up a tidy study space.
- Revisit topics several times with a gap in between.
- Vary your revision with different activities.
- Do lots of practice papers and questions.
- Set aside time to do fun things.
- Keep your ~~phone~~ and other ~~distractions~~ away.

Zzz

- Sleep and eat properly.

Mmmmm

- Don't panic! Plan your work and work your plan and you'll be eating your eggs-ams for breakfast!

○ ● ○ ● ○ ● ○

CGP

Ha hahaha haa haha!

(That's the sound of us laughing in the face of revision)

GCSE revision *seems* like a challenge, but this CGP book makes it hilariously simple...

- **Rock-solid revision techniques from CGP's experts...**
  Trust us — we know what's what
- **Tips for all the major GCSE subjects...**
  And a bit of fun along the way, we promise
- **Plus online videos, timetables and examples...**
  Lots of handy tools to make revision easier

You *could* look for someone else's dreary revision tips...
...but really — why, *why* would you do that? ☺

Ready... Steady... Revise

CGP

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